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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

We hope the rumour about Lord Kitchener, as we go to press, is false. Lord Kitchener is the greatest public servant in this country to-day. We describe him, deliberately, as indispensable. *He must in all events, now and in the future, play the master military part in this war.* Meanwhile it is the duty of the country to carry on under the present Government, because really to-day there is no better practical substitute. A nation which allowed its rulers to neglect preparing against an obvious peril and went into a world-wide war without military study or military means clearly has no right to turn upon its leaders when they are learning to retrieve an unfortunate past. **We shall not win the war by reshuffling the Cabinet or hunting for godlike genius in the street or among members of the Parliamentary rump.** We shall win the war by learning from our enemies what war really means, and bettering the instruction.

We do not altogether understand what is going to happen with regard to the Cabinet. It is not to be cut down. But there are to be three or five who are bound, or not bound, to consult all the others, who in turn are responsible, or not responsible, for everything the three or the five may do. Possibly, if these arrangements were important or interesting enough to repay a more careful study, we might find a key to the secret drawer of this latest design in Cabinets. But no amount of re-shuffling of our political committees will greatly affect the course of the war.

This question of the Cabinet is upon quite a different level from the question of the War Council. As our military correspondent points out, and has frequently pointed out during the last twelve months, unity of direction in the conduct of military operations is essential. Co-ordination between the Staffs of the Allied Powers, and between the Staffs of the War Office, Admiralty and Foreign Office, is an elementary necessity. These departments all share in the general

direction of the war, and cannot be kept water-tight. Mr. Asquith promises in future "Co-ordination and contact, close, constant, practical, continuing". Here, at any rate, we may look for a firmer and stronger direction.

Mr. Asquith stated in his address to the House of Commons on Tuesday that he entirely refused to regard himself as a criminal or white-sheeted penitent. He refused to be taken as making in any sense an apology. Perhaps he would accept the word "explanation" as describing his review of the Government's dealings with the war. It was in no sense the triumphant affair which his gallant introduction seemed to promise. "We did not succeed", "disappointment and failure"—these were recurrent phrases of his tale: a tale which was offered to the country as the "whole truth" about the war. Mr. Asquith's speech is not, of course, the whole truth about the war. No public speech at this time could be that. Nor do we in the least wish Mr. Asquith's reserves of silence to be exhaustively drawn upon. We even wonder whether it is quite opportune or wise to defer so far to a popular cry for information as to admit to our enemies that, in the view of its originators and executors, the expedition to the Dardanelles is a failure.

How far do these admissions of Mr. Asquith really go? He admits that the expedition to the Dardanelles was not determined "exclusively by military and naval considerations". He tells us that there were "doubts and hesitations" in the mind of the Government's principal naval adviser. But he also declares that the expedition was not due to "some undefined personality of great authority and overmastering will"—where, indeed, is such an authority to be found to-day?—and he accepts, along with the late Government, a full share of the responsibility of the first naval attack. This attack, he is careful to say, "was most carefully considered and developed in consultation between the Admiral upon the spot and the War Staff of the Admiralty here; and before any final decision was

taken it was communicated to the French Admiralty, who entirely approved of it and agreed to take part in it, and it was enthusiastically—I do not think I am using too strong a word—received and acclaimed by the illustrious Grand Duke, the then Commander of the Russian Army, who rightly anticipated that it would assist him in the Caucasus". In brief, the expedition to the Dardanelles was a diplomatic and political enterprise, to which the War Staff consented with misgiving.

The next stage of the operations, the combined naval and military attack upon Gallipoli and Suvla Bay, was left entirely in the direction of the Commanders on the spot and the General Staff in London. As to this we quote Mr. Asquith's statement verbatim: "I will not attempt at this moment—it would be quite irrelevant to my purpose—to attach either praise or blame to this man or that, or to this unit or that, but I will say this for myself, that in the whole course of the war, with its ups and downs, I have never sustained a keener disappointment than in the failure of this operation. The chances of success, as it seemed to us and to those on the spot, were not only great but preponderant, while the consequences of success, if success had been attained, were almost immeasurable. It would have solved the whole situation in the Balkans. It would have prevented the possibility of that which unhappily now is the realised fact, the adhesion of Bulgaria to our opponents. It would have laid the capital of the Turkish Empire open to menace and possibly to capture, and throughout the whole of the Eastern world it would have been acclaimed as the most brilliant and conclusive demonstration of the superiority of the Allies. *We did not succeed.*"

Mr. Asquith ascribed the diplomatic collapse and present position of the Allies in the Balkans to three causes: (1) a necessary lack of unity of direction in the Allied negotiations, each of the Allied Powers naturally viewing the whole question from a slightly different angle; (2) the animosities among the Balkan States themselves, a legacy of the treaty of Bukarest; and (3) the failure of Greece to fulfill her treaty obligations to Serbia. Mr. Asquith curiously omits from this part of his speech any reference to the heavy blows dealt by the German armies in Galicia and Poland, or any reference back to the operations in the Dardanelles. These events were really far more active motives for the attitude in October of Bulgaria and Greece than the motives on which Mr. Asquith dwelled.

Mr. Asquith stated, and Sir E. Grey made a separate speech in express confirmation of this, that all our "preparations" to go to the help of Serbia were, up to 4 October, taken on the assumption that the Greeks would be active partners in the expedition. Not till 4 October did our Government begin to act independently of Greece. Sir E. Grey on this point could claim no more than that there had been no delay in preparation to meet the position after its gravity had been realised. The defence of the Government completely saves its honour in regard to Serbia, but saves it only at the expense of its foresight. The Government had not prepared against the attitude of Greece because the attitude of Greece was not foreseen.

This was the precise point on which Sir E. Carson resigned. His speech in the House on Tuesday makes it quite clear that, feeling as he did on this matter, his resignation was entirely right. The whole debate showed that his colleagues fully admit the patriotism of his action, Sir E. Grey expressly referring to the sincerity and single-mindedness of his conduct. Sir E. Carson's resignation was based on what he regards as a discrepancy between Sir E. Grey's declaration of 8 November and the subsequent actions of the Government. Sir E. Grey had said: "We are prepared to give to our friends in the Balkans all the support in our power". Did Serbia, Sir E. Carson asks the

Government, "think for a moment that that only meant that when the time arose we would send a General down to the Eastern waters to try to find out what the situation was as regards the Dardanelles and Egypt and Serbia and all these other parts in the Eastern theatre of war"? Sir E. Carson desired a stronger action in the Near East before the Government were really prepared to take it. That is the final and complete explanation of his resignation.

Mr. Asquith's statement as to recruiting was of the kind people are, we suppose, satisfied to accept as expressing the general view. That no patriotic man would hesitate to accept compulsion if it were necessary; that the past methods have been haphazard, capricious and unjust; that the country will look for a definite and swift decision on the whole subject when Lord Derby's list has been closed—all this is common ground. The really significant paragraph of Mr. Asquith's statement is a statement which reads very like a pledge: "I am told by Lord Derby and others that there is some doubt among married men who are now being asked to enlist whether they may not be called upon to serve, having enlisted, or promised to enlist, while younger and unmarried men are holding back and not doing their duty. Let them disabuse themselves of that idea. So far as I am concerned, I should certainly say the obligation of the married man to enlist ought not to be enforced or binding upon him unless and until—I hope by voluntary effort, and if not, by some other means—the unmarried men are dealt with first." If this be strictly a pledge, it removes at least one of those "capricious", "haphazard", and "unjust" features of the present system to which Mr. Asquith referred.

Chatterton in his poem "Ælla" asks what is "Honour"? and concludes, if we remember rightly, that it is just a clerkly name. What is an "honourable truce" in politics exactly? it may be asked. There is an honourable truce as regards National Service for example: the opposing sides have agreed that, whilst Lord Derby's campaign continues, it shall not be re-argued. We have seen already how Mr. Charles Hobhouse, M.P., interprets an honourable truce. He and Mr. Percy Alden, M.P., and another good Radical or two take it to signify that brutal Tory National Service men are to be set on and smashed during the honourable truce. Then there is the "Westminster Gazette", beloved of so many honourable gentlemen on its own side. How does it interpret the truce? We picked it up the other day, opened it at about the middle, and at once our eyes fell on a report of Mr. Charles Hobhouse's bitter denunciation of National Service or "Conscription", to employ once more the bogey word. The "Westminster Gazette"—which is all for the truce, of course—describes this denunciation, and in heavy type, as "Powerful". We have already discovered the "Westminster Gazette's" notion of Humour: now we have its notion of Honour.

Since Lord Derby came to the rescue recruiting has greatly improved; those who know the disastrous and even ridiculous result of the grand London rally of 2 October (which, according to Labour leaders, was spoilt by "the weather") must be amazed at the improvement. Now a large number of the sheep are really being driven in and securely penned; and there is remarkably little bleating so far. Later the work will become still more animating, when, for example, the women get to work in various directions and force in the stray lambs; and still later there will be a scene of rare excitement doubtless, and perhaps an attempt in many instances to jump the hurdles and rush up any lane or through any gap in the hedge. We are only witnessing the opening scenes of the great sheep fair of the voluntary system.

When the khaki armlets begin to appear in the streets there is sure to be plenty of animation. The khaki armlet will divide the young men of Great

Britain into two very distinct classes: there is not the faintest doubt about that. And the distinction will be a not agreeable one. But the voluntarists must face it, and we suppose they are well prepared for it. Compliments of a somewhat doubtful nature will fly when the armlet appears in the street and the young man appears there without khaki and without his armlet. We suppose the out-and-out anti-Conscriptionists have duly considered this and made their minds easy about it.

A correspondent writes from on board an American liner: "In the steerage we have 460 passengers. Of this number, quite 250 (so the purser tells me) are able-bodied, lusty, young Irishmen, now fleeing from their country and from Conscription (which they are afraid will come). I am asking myself: who is finding the money for fares? And each, you know, must have £10 in hand or the emigration authorities would send them back. Perhaps they may not be called upon to produce the £10, but there's just a chance that they will, and so the £10 each must be ready. Where does this money come from? Most of these young fellows are peasants. How could each man save so much?" We agree with our correspondent that here is a matter which should be most sternly investigated.

We are glad to see that the emigration offices of our Dominions are sharply watching for any suspicion in their clients of an intention to evade the coming liabilities of the war. This is not the time for any able-bodied young man to leave these islands to make his fortune elsewhere. More particularly, our Dominions have not sent out some of their bravest and best men to get in return a selfish crowd of immigrants who are robbing the Empire of their services, military or industrial, where most they are needed. It is an act of disloyalty and a want of faith in our cause and country for any man capable of useful civil or military work to go fortune-hunting in other countries. The British Dominions are saying firmly and clearly that they will not have them. There remain America and South America; and here the passage should be closed at once. The American Government would doubtless be glad of any restriction which would save America from an unpleasant adulteration of her citizenship.

Mr. Asquith's reference to the brave deeds of the British submarines in the Sea of Marmora almost echoes a tribute paid to these neglected operations in the SATURDAY a fortnight ago. His tribute generally to the Fleet was full-throated, but not in the least louder in tone than the subject needs. The British Fleet to-day is supreme and magnificent. It has proved to the world that it can, and that it deserves to, rule the seas. No talk concerning a "freedom of the seas", talk inspired and directed by our enemy, is likely to blind the nations to the fact that Great Britain's sea-power is necessary to her existence, and that Great Britain may be fully trusted not to abuse it.

Lord Robert Cecil sufficiently answers all those critics who speak continually as though the British Fleet were thwarted and hamstrung by the Foreign Office when he says, with perfect truth, that the Fleet has been asked to do in this war more than it has ever been allowed to do in any previous war. It has blockaded outright since war broke out every port of the enemy, and since May, 1915, it has attempted to do what no other country has done—namely, blockade the enemy through neutral ports as well. "That was entirely a new departure, brought about by the conditions of modern warfare. No one had ever before attempted to blockade a country through the neutral ports of countries adjoining the belligerents. He thought the Foreign Office had the right to ask for some recognition of the fact that it had succeeded in that policy without getting into serious trouble with

any of the neutrals concerned. That policy required delicacy of treatment and adroitness of handling. The difficulty had been to distinguish between that part of a trade going to the neutral country which was really destined for that country and that part which was ultimately going on to Germany. That was a laborious process which inflicted considerable difficulties on ourselves and great injury and inconvenience on neutral countries."

We have frequently insisted upon this point; and we need not now return over ground which is very familiar to our readers. Lord Robert Cecil has at last been able to point to a few facts which very clearly show how wild and ignorant has been the clamour against the Government in this matter of German trade and the British Navy. Ninety-six per cent. of Germany's exports have been stopped. No cotton has gone into Germany since 1 May except by way of smuggling. Making cotton contraband—the favourite idea of the wildest agitators—has made no perceptible difference to the situation. The public need, in fact, have no doubt at all that the British blockade of Germany is as successful as any blockade could be which the neutral nations of the world would tolerate, or which the British Navy could enforce.

M. Briand's first speech as Prime Minister of France proclaims him a natural leader of all parties. His emphasis upon the *union sacrée* of France was no less firm than his desire for a very close agreement and touch between France and her Allies. He declared an absolute identity of view between France and Great Britain as to the coming operations in the Near East; and his speech, all through, was quietly confident as to the ultimate complete victory of the Allies.

The vote against the Government of M. Zaimis is a further example of the fearless and decisive way in which M. Venizelos expresses the views of the Greek Parliament. The vote against the King's Government arose upon a disrespectful action of the King's War Minister. M. Venizelos in opposition has behaved all through with wonderful frankness and a most resolute independence. He has let it be known that, should he return to power, his first act will be to declare war upon Bulgaria; also that he does not regard the present régime as being constitutional.

Nish is now seriously threatened by the Bulgarian armies, which were reported yesterday to be within six miles of the town. Simultaneously the Austro-German forces are closing in from the North. To them has already fallen the great Serbian arsenal of Kragujevatz, half-way between Nish and Belgrade. Monastir also is threatened by another division of Bulgarian troops; but here we learn that British cavalry have been in action and that the advance for the moment is checked. The French have now been in action for several days; but it is hard to say what effect the Allied advance-guards have so far had upon the campaign generally.

The Germans during the last week have made several most determined efforts to regain their lost trenches in Champagne, and early in the week they again counter-attacked the French in this district with "important masses" of troops. The attack was repulsed. On the British front no infantry engagement has taken place. In the East the German efforts towards Dvinsk have, apparently, slackened, and the Russians are able to report counter-attacks along their northern line. South, in Galicia, a definite success is recorded, 5,000 Germans and Austrians being captured in an attack on the Strypa.

Sir John French's latest dispatch is addressed not to the officials of the War Office, but to the public;

it is a long *communiqué*, and it should be studied carefully, word by word. In this note we choose only two points. The first one is that we came near to winning a victory of first-rate importance; and the second is that delays occurred in the coming of reinforcements, with the result that our troops lost a good deal of the ground which they had won.

A Scottish division of the new Army (the 15th) swept forward with wonderful *élan*, and in a little more than sixty minutes occupied Loos, Fosse 14 bis (north of Hill 70), and Hill 70 itself, while some units went right through even to the Cité St. Auguste, a mile east of Hill 70. But on the left of this division there was a hitch. Here the 1st Division was unable at first to advance with its right brigade, so the enemy had time to collect local reserves behind the strong second line. Five hours later—at 1 p.m.—these German reserves were brought up and the advanced portions of the Scottish Division at Fosse 14 bis and on the far side of Hill 70 were driven back. In other words, the enemy was swifter than our own side to reinforce a necessary position.

Lord Lansdowne's definite announcement that there will be no general election opportunely forestalls agitation from some not very thoughtful sticklers for the constitution. A general election in the middle of the war would be a calamity. The country will approve the Government's frank declaration that it will spare no pains to prevent an election from taking place.

Sir F. E. Smith, the Attorney-General, in place of Sir Edward Carson, is rightly in the Cabinet. We may sweep away, at the present time, the various juridical and pedantic niceties which assert he should not be in the Cabinet because it is not right for an Attorney-General to be there. The point is that Sir F. E. Smith should, for entirely different reasons, be in the Cabinet; if necessary, room could have been made by one of the less essential members of it retiring. Mr. Cave succeeds him naturally enough as Solicitor-General, an admirable appointment.

The death was announced this week of Herman Ridder, the leading journalist working without scruple for Germany in New York. From an English point of view there have been in the same trade greater sinners by far than Ridder—needy blackmailers and natural prison birds who have professed themselves English or Irish for years, and have lived on those professions and finally joined the enemy of England. Ridder, at all events, never was the traitor; and there is some virtue in that negative.

As an Imperial statesman Sir Charles Tupper will probably be identified in years to come with his fight in 1900 for the despatch of a Canadian force to fight the Empire's battles in South Africa. He thus set up an ideal of Imperial solidity to be finely followed by his country in the Great War. Sir Charles has lived to see the best of his Imperial dream come true: he has seen the Dominions fighting beside the men from Great Britain, and thus preparing all through the Empire a closer and more lively realisation of a common purpose and ideal.

The King's address to his troops finely and truly says: "I have decorated many of you. But had I decorated all who deserve recognition for conspicuous valour, there would have been no limit, for the whole Army is illustrious." That is the feeling of the decorated men themselves. Invariably they feel that their distinctions are given to them in trust for their comrades and their regiments. The whole Army deeply regrets that the King's visit was marred by his accident. Happily the results are less serious than at first was feared, and we may now expect a speedy recovery of the King from his injuries.

LEADING ARTICLES.

THE BLUNDERS IN GALLIPOLI AND SERBIA.

FOR weeks past many people have been crying out for the truth. Only give the public the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, however bad it be, one has been told, and they will bear up cheerfully and settle down in right earnest to win the war. This cry for the truth has seemed to us to be rather overdone, at times too shrill. However, the public has now got a large measure of the truth about at least one great side of the War, the Dardanelles, has reached very nearly the main bedrock facts about that operation, and we hope the good results of this publication of the truth will be all that was anticipated. The Prime Minister, in his speech on Tuesday, told the public in so many words that the Gallipoli campaign has proved a failure, and that it has disappointed him very greatly. What he related has doubtless been quite well known to the enemy, and has been for some time the common property of the Balkan States, Italy, America, and other Powers. It has also been perfectly well known to people in this country who have troubled to observe and think at all carefully—whether they have been specially informed or not. Months ago, considerably before the time when the Liberal Government fell to pieces and had to be propped up by the leaders of the Opposition, we had reached the conclusion that this extraordinarily hard and perilous adventure could only succeed—if it was ultimately to succeed—by a sort of miracle of individual and collective heroism in our glorious soldiers and those of Australasia. Indeed, at the very start of the campaign, one of the most sagacious and most experienced statesmen in this country—who was not consulted at all in the matter by the Government, perhaps because they were in a great hurry—told the writer of this article that the thing simply could not be done. It very soon became clear enough to us that at least he was infinitely nearer the right view than the crowd of eager, thoughtless "optimists," as they chose to describe themselves, who raised the cry, and long kept it going, that we should soon be "through", that we were "forcing the Narrows", and that the Turks were on the point of scuttling out of Constantinople, etc. Our opinion was, months ago, and still is, that the general public was deceived ludicrously as to the Dardanelles, not by this Government or the last Government, and not by the Press Bureau or any Department, so much as by the amateur experts and strategists and "optimists", who combined to give the public exactly the sort of intelligence—happy and hopeful intelligence—it wanted and paid to have; and through the same combination the public was deceived, and it paid to be deceived, about the great campaign in Galicia and in Poland. The Government—this one as well as the last one—have made some bad mistakes, some costly blunders, but we must say, in common fairness to them, that they have not deceived a large section of the public so much as that public has deceived itself or insisted on being deceived by self-appointed experts and strategists. It would be easy to prove this by a thousand quotations from printed matter; but really the fact is past dispute.

The record of the last Government in regard to the Gallipoli campaign is very bad; and we are bound to say that the record of the present Government in regard to the Balkan crisis and the campaign in Serbia to-day seems to us to be not much better.

What Sir Edward Carson, in his vigorous but by no means vindictive speech, said about the mess in the matter of Serbia is what probably nineteen out of every twenty intelligent, dispassionate people are saying to-day.

First, as to Gallipoli: it was a wild business, if not actually a "damn-the-consequences" business, in its inception; and, unless we are strangely misinformed, Lord Fisher had and spoke considerably more than the "some doubts and hesitations" which are now attributed to him. Some doubts and hesitations is surely a discreet euphemism! The argument that it has kept 200,000 Turks busy will not do, for it has kept more than that number of British soldiers busy, too, and has put over a hundred thousand of them under ground or into hospitals. Nor is the argument that it was likely to appeal to Bulgaria much more telling: it was not likely to appeal to Bulgaria unless it succeeded, and the difficulties of success were gigantic—must have been known to be gigantic by the true experts. Gallipoli is bad, the worst thing in the war—from a British point of view, at any rate—so far. We say no more of it now; but cannot possibly in reason and honesty say less.

As to the crisis to-day in the Balkans, the Government are not, of course, to blame, because the great and dazzling feat of German arms in Galicia and Poland finally decided Bulgaria to go in with the enemy, and Greece, let us say, to hesitate—fortunately that hesitation is not likely to go beyond a point, because there is the Allied Fleet in the Mediterranean to be reckoned with, and there are food supplies to be considered in this connection. But it certainly does look as if they were slow to understand what the result of that German feat might well be on the Balkan Powers; and our impression, despite the Prime Minister and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, is that, even when they knew the worst, they were not swift and decisive in action. Sir Edward Carson will appear to most people, we fancy, to have driven home his criticism as to this eleventh-hour policy in the Balkans. An atmosphere of nervelessness seems to hang about it. The whole thing too much suggests to us drifting in a storm.

These appear to us to be the two most signal points in the Prime Minister's speech and in the Foreign Secretary's which followed later: the admission that the Gallipoli adventure has proved a costly failure, and the impression of drifting and floundering about which the Serbian policy of the Government conveys. There were other important matters touched on; and, by the way, there was notably one on which the Prime Minister chose to say nothing. We mean the neglect of the Government, past and present, to tackle the question of some reasonable defence of London from Zeppelins before the Zeppelins at length attacked London. As to this, the Prime Minister said nothing: and there is nothing to say except that it was a deplorable oversight. It was an oversight by, as they say at coroners' inquests on the victims, "a person or persons unknown".

Of the matters the Prime Minister touched on, besides Gallipoli and the Balkan affair, there were recruiting and the size of the Cabinet and its method of conducting the war. We do not understand at present the new Cabinet device: it appears to be something in the nature of a secret drawer within the inner Cabinet. We shall, presumably, know a little more about this soon, and meanwhile prefer not to express an opinion. We doubt, however, whether, at the

best, much greater success in the war can be secured by ingenious Cabinet permutations and combinations; but something can be hopefully attempted, we dare say.

As to the question of recruiting, the Prime Minister said that, if needs be, he would "stick at nothing": in other words, if the present brisk campaign of pressure, of threats of "Conscription" made on a thousand platforms—"if you won't come, you'll be fetched"—of "peaceful persuasion", do not bring the young men in—why then the Prime Minister will suffer the State to step in and take the young men willy nilly by the collar. Compulsion springs from the two words *cum* and *pello*: the second means "to drive"; and we have that part of compulsion already and shall have more of it when the canvassers, women as well as men, are fairly let loose through the land! The first syllable of the dreadful word compulsion will perhaps arrive later, if the second is not enough. Even the Labour Party, even the choicest spirits among the Trades Unions themselves, deign to say they may allow the State to move if the young men cannot be driven to the recruiting offices in large enough batches by threats, prayers, and baits. So we are making some progress in this matter.

"And", it is asked, "what is to be done about the Government itself? Seeing that it has confessed to failure in Gallipoli, and that it has bungled over this Balkan crisis to-day, shall the nation support it any longer?" The only reply that we can discover, which is based on judgment, is that the nation must go on with the Government and will go on with the Government at present. We have said, in effect, over and over again that the weakness of the destructive critics of the Coalition Government is that they are all destruction; they are hot to pull down; but when they are asked what they propose to build up now in its stead they are barren of counsel—or, at any rate, their counsel is barren of practice and knowledge. Our system of government is not well adapted to war, and we have to-day no man to the fore who is notably stronger than half a dozen of his colleagues. We want an arrogant commanding man, to gather the reins—and take up the whip. But no such figure, in or out of the Government, appears. All the country can do at this time is to work away hard and steadily; and sternly repress all cries and clamour.

ON GOING TO WAR UNPREPARED.

A CORRESPONDENT has written to ask us what the Foreign Secretary can have meant when, in September, speaking in the House of Commons of Serbia's peril, he said we were "prepared" to render her assistance in the form most welcome to her. What resources, asks our correspondent, can the Government possibly claim they were prepared to bring to the aid of Serbia in her dire need? Can they, he says, contend they were prepared with military resources to meet the situation? And, if military resources were not intended in the Government statement, what kind of resources, of any service to Serbia in her immediate necessities, were? The answer can only be that military resources were referred to in the Government reply; and it is no less in doubt that the Government were in reality not prepared to furnish the necessary resources. To prepare—unless all sense be twisted out of the word—can only mean to make ready beforehand, the beforehand being the very essence of the whole word. But we suspect that what the Government actually meant to imply was not that it was prepared, but that it was willing

to aid Serbia—which is quite another thing! We hope we may not be charged either with pedantry, or with a reckless desire to damage the Government and help any clamour against it, if we suggest that the less said by their spokesmen to-day about preparation or preparedness the discreeter said. Most of our troubles and difficulties to-day are due to the painfully plain truth that in August 1914 the nation went to war ludicrously unprepared for a great land campaign against a country which, it was perfectly well known, had been preparing and preparing for such a war for decades past. This fact, so absurdly elementary, yet strange to say so fiercely resented—and actually contradicted!—in certain quarters to-day, was pointed out a year ago in the SATURDAY REVIEW; and it was emphasised afresh only last week. We, of course, muddled into the war essentially unprepared with a scientific system of raising the necessary and huge armies required. Yet it seems to be seriously believed by quite a number of people that if this heroic thing is done now, or that heroic thing, we shall somehow contrive to escape forthwith from the penalties of unpreparedness. But no such escape is possible. Even if we had a scientific and drastic system of national service to-morrow—such as the Conservative members of the Cabinet wish for—we should not speedily escape our past.

We have got to dree our weird; and it takes a deal of dreeing when the enemy is a Power like Germany, organised—whatever Professor Ashley may, as a political economist, argue to the contrary—with a Satanic efficiency for a great land war in every part of the machine. Nations must dree their own weirds just as individuals must dree them. The philosophy of George Eliot and the theory of compensations in Emerson's great essay are well worth considering in this matter: we cannot expect to escape our pasts. That law is recorded in a more authoritative place, however, than any book; it is recorded in Nature, everywhere. And why should nations expect to escape their pasts any more than individuals?

The particular past we are now not escaping—and are not in the least likely to escape till we have paid the account in full—is the past of unpreparedness. Some people hold the view that to prepare for war is a vice, not a virtue. We do not take that view, though it may be arguable. But this is sure: whether unpreparedness be a virtue, or whether a vice, we are now reaping its harvest, and the crop is heavy and must take long to garner.

SPENDTHRIFT FINANCE.

MORE than four months have gone by since Lord Middleton, on 26 June and 3 July, addressed to the SATURDAY REVIEW his indictment of spendthrift finance. A new Government had just been formed, and Lord Middleton wished it to begin its reign as a good financier, instead of obeying that habit of reckless expenditure which had come into vogue since the death of Mr. Gladstone. The yearly load of civil expenses, apart from revenue-producing departments, had increased from £20,000,000 to over £59,000,000. Though the population had grown meantime by only one-eighth, yet our country in 1913-14 spent on her civil affairs nearly £3 for every £1 of her Gladstonian expenditure. Even this extravagance did not satisfy a great many electors, who wanted to retrench on the Army and Navy in order to get funds for new social adventures. Then at last war came; and the people, following an old habit, grew sentimental in its attitude to spendthrifts. Money flowed into a Pactolus. Even the War Bonus was hailed with joy, because civilian sentiment wished to keep as far off as possible from stinginess. For eleven months, as Lord Middleton said with truth, the country was run on the principle that the War should not damage any class, except men at the Front and the income-tax payer. "The pay of Government workers was increased, without any obligation to save; pensions and separation allowances

were lavishly voted; responsibility for war damage was assumed by Government; prices were regulated by the official purchase of food; in fact, Government became the universal foster-mother."

Such was the position of affairs on 26 June. Since then there has been infinite talk about the grave need of Government economy; but talk, like steam from a kettle, is wasted motive-power. It has a fussy, soothing sound, and the comfort it gives is not at all favourable to the difficult practice of departmental economy. Meantime the daily expenses of the war have risen higher and higher. In May and June they rose from £2,000,000 a day to £3,000,000, and now they are said to be about £5,000,000. Another leap upward will come soon, for the war spreads like an epidemic, and our Allies need financial help. But this point is not the main one. The main point is that those who spend the nation's wealth do not yet show in their acts the impartial discipline of economy. It is all very well to say that we cannot sustain the burden which this war has laid upon us unless the people and their Government make haste to accept far greater sacrifices than they have yet been willing to bear. To talk in this general way is commonplace, and trite statements are not often entirely true.

Let the Government reflect that the community at the present time is divided into five classes:

1. Those who have found prosperity in the national danger;
2. Those who have had a bitter struggle against dwindling incomes and increasing prices;
3. Those who have lived in anxiety and sorrow on separation allowances or on pensions;
4. The wealthy and the well-to-do;
5. Civil servants and the State's officials.

It is obvious that no general statement on economy can be applied justly to all these classes. Class 1 has been troublesome, and Class 5 has been short-sighted; while the others have left little to be desired in their conduct. Class 1 has been troublesome, partly because high profits and a roaring trade encourage egotism, and partly because the Government has yielded overmuch to trade unionism, instead of asking fearlessly for the maximum of social duty, of citizen self-denial. Class 5 has been short-sighted for several reasons, but mainly because public servants belong to a routine and hold tenaciously to their caste privileges. Most of them are free from the perilous competition of the outside world; and most of them earn secure pensions as well as regularly increasing wages or salaries. Not a few of them come to believe that the State exists for them; their bureau is the universe; and they believe that only an ignoramus would dare to find fault with their customs and methods. Hence it is futile to tell them that their departments are extravagant. They argue glibly enough: "We earn less by far than the Cabinet Ministers, who receive peace pay, after fifteen months of war, yet swell into eloquence over retrenchment".

As an example of the bureaucratic attitude to economy, let us take the officials of our elementary schools. Both they and their journals are insultingly enraged because many ratepayers and taxpayers wish to make large economies during the war on school expenses. At the present time the nation cannot afford to invest about £27,000,000 a year in a system of education which is known to be inefficient. The present burden to the State is not a burden of wise economy. Even the teaching of legitimate patriotism has been neglected in our elementary schools, as the Earl of Cromer points out in this month's "Nineteenth Century and After". Consider the official documents which from time to time have emanated from Whitehall. "The central authorities", says Lord Cromer, "would appear to speak with bated breath of the question of teaching patriotism". There was issued in 1914—before the outbreak of war—some "Suggestions for the Teaching of History"; "and it cannot be said that these very cautious official 'suggestions' are much calculated to evoke patriotic enthusiasm". Indeed, "it is almost impossible to avoid the suspicion that

they have been deliberately prepared with a view to acting as an anodyne to those timid and weak-kneed patriots who have the spectre of 'militarism' so constantly before their eyes as to indulge in the wholly illusory fear that neither patriotism nor anything approaching to martial ardour can be encouraged without a serious risk being incurred of Great Britain being Prussianised. . . . On the whole, it may be said the Board of Education does little or nothing to teach patriotism, neither apparently is any attempt made to check the idiosyncrasies of those teachers whose personal proclivities would rather lead them to discourage patriotic sentiment. Cannot something be done to remedy this defect?"

Not from any standpoint has the country been served well by the Board of Education and its teaching methods. Yet the bureaucratic mind contradicts every truthful criticism, and declares that no just economies can be imposed on board schools during the war. What the nation needs here, as elsewhere, is a swift and thorough cutting down of public expenditure, since the defeat of Germany in the shortest possible time and at the lowest possible cost is the supreme duty. Rates must be cut down in all directions; for example; and there must be no weak surrender to noisy opposition such as humbled the Government recently over the halfpenny post.

Officialism puts too much confidence in taxes and loans, and then, quite suddenly, it romps into a panic. Even then it fails to see that public economy needs a financial dictatorship. True mercy to the public in national retrenchment can be attained only by methods that seem merciless. Suppose there were a supreme triumvirate to manage our three M's—Men, Money, and Munitions. Lord Middleton might well be entrusted with the second. He is fearless, and cares not a rap for popularity; he is just, and his mind is unclouded by the bureaucratic atmosphere. He would try to save money by the half-million, and we feel sure that he would succeed. Countrymen complain, for instance, that the buying of remounts has been too profitable to the sellers; and none can believe that the annual cost per man of a vast army ought to have risen in fifteen months to a sum ranging between £250 and £300. The prices paid to boys and men for the building of camp huts need impartial inquiry; and a great many other details in the spending of public money should be audited at once by an intrepid expert, and not by a debating committee or commission.

THE GREAT WAR.

APPRECIATION (NO. 66) BY VIEILLE MOUSTACHE.

THE OCTOBER DESPATCH.—THE WESTERN THEATRE.

MILITARY despatches, when written at four months' interval, which before being submitted for public information undergo considerable pruning by the War Censor, lose interest when they appear, and arouse but a modified enthusiasm both in the armchair reader and in the soldier who has borne his share in the story which is narrated.

That for three months a period of monotony of repeated side events existed along the front held by our troops in the Western theatre is evident by the brevity in which in the first six paragraphs of the despatch minor operations are dismissed. And yet these were somewhat of a nature of considerable tactical importance. The Ypres salient—a thorn in the side of the enemy and a military outwork in our main line, has cost us severe casualties and figures again in the despatch. The successful effort made by the enemy against that portion of our 2nd Army at Hooze on 30 July is told in a brief paragraph which narrates how "surprise and temporary confusion" was caused in our ranks by the use of another of those abominable devices in which the enemy appears to glory. Burning liquid, driven by strong jets into our trench line, afforded a curtain behind which the enemy succeeded in penetrating our positions. After repeated gallant

attempts at counter-attacks by our troops the cost of the efforts became prohibitive and the situation was accepted by the Army Commander, who directed a new trench line to be occupied. Our men will have good reason for revenge when the hour comes for dealing with the veritable Beelzebub that commands the hostile armies in this sector, for it was at this same point that the hellish device of poisonous gas was first developed with such success by this Satanic hero.

The arrival of a new leader with a fresh plan put an end, however, to the short period of stalemate in this region. On 9 August the 6th Division more than re-established the situation. These operations at Hooze and at Bellegarde Lake deserve a despatch to themselves, but in the gigantic nature of the strategic task before us they can only figure as side shows. The troops of the 2nd Army and others in the 1st Army were again destined to figure as "containing forces" meant to demonstrate in a secondary attack or feint at points in the hostile line on the day of the "push" farther south—an unenviable duty in which they more than succeeded.

The main interest in the latest official story of the deeds of our armies in the Western theatre centres in the "push" that was designed in concert with our Allies on 25 September last. In the light of subsequent events it is as well to note that the decision for joint action was taken after our share of the line of defence had been much extended by taking over considerable portions of the French line. Such an increase of extension of front can only be carried out by a sacrifice of depth in formation elsewhere, unless material reinforcements in numbers are available for the new front line. In the redistribution of our armies that was necessary to meet the new decision for prolonging our line of defence the links of the chain thus extended were apparently of uneven alloy. Such must always be expected when hastily raised formations are introduced into the battlefield.

The plan of the main attack on 25 September was conceived in that spirit of simplicity that should govern all military evolutions. The high road leading East from Vermelles to Hulluch defined the sphere of operation for the respective Army Corps detailed for the attack, the 1st Army Corps working on the north, the 4th Army Corps on the south of the road. The plan met with initial misfortune not unusual when Allied Armies are meditating co-operation in the offensive. The 10th French Army that was to act on the right was not ready to move. This blot in co-ordinate staff work was to cost us dearly. A change of the direction of attack tending more or less to the South-East was in consequence imposed upon the leader of the 4th Army Corps. Rather than postpone the hour for simultaneous attack, with the Allies on the right, the British Commander anticipated a gap between his two attacking Army Corps, should success crown their efforts, by keeping in his own hand a strong reserve. Success is imperilled if at the last moment a change in dispositions is deemed imperative by the directing mind. Few can realise what a deep study is necessary thoroughly to grasp all the niceties that must be mastered by every individual in the chain of responsibility to whom is committed the task of launching and carrying out an attack. Both eye and mind are focussed days beforehand upon the objective that has been allotted. The situation from all its points, front to rear, right to left, has to be mastered. Only those who have passed through the regimental mill can realise the significance of the intensive nature of explanation that is required for the preparation of an attack. Dispositions for supports, reserves, etc., have been made known to all, and yet we see at the last moment the concentration of mind on the set purpose is thrown to the winds by a simple order. Similarly, by retaining a General Reserve in the hands of the supreme Army Commander, under modern conditions a high physical capacity of the men and a thorough grip of a military situation by the subordinate leaders are essential to success. With the broad fronts that now obtain in

battle, and in consequence of the extended range of modern artillery, the precise disposition of a General Reserve is a matter of much moment. A piece of ill-luck may find them located at such a distance from the point where their services are required as to witness their arrival dog-tired and unequal for combat, or to see them being slowly hammered to pieces by long-range gun fire. It is as well to avoid such alternatives if possible. The responsibility for the postponement of a premeditated attack is a very grave one. Time-tables that have been accurately drawn up for artillery preparation, for allowance for sufficient daylight to carry out the purpose, for replenishing of ammunition, for evacuation of wounded, and a hundred possibilities cannot be altered at a moment's notice even under the best of staff work. The British Commander decided to act according to his own programme, with the two alterations above commented upon (change of direction and retention of a Reserve), and the attack was launched as prearranged at 6.30 a.m. on the 25th.

Notable tactical objectives are enumerated in the despatch, and a fight for the slag heaps that surround mining villages roughly describes the terrain of contest. The attacks made by the respective Army Corps met with unequal success. That a penetration of the hostile lines was hoped for is evident from the mass of cavalry that was at hand for the purpose of pursuit. Whether the terrain lends itself to cavalry action or not is a matter for the man on the spot to decide, but with the trench discipline that our mounted men have acquired they would probably have sufficed to replace the strong Infantry Reserve which was held in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief, and which were somewhat late in reaching the scene where their services might have been of supreme value. There is sad reading in a despatch where confession is made of inability to hold ground which brave men have gained in vain and which has to be yielded up for want of timely reinforcements. The bulge that was driven into the hostile front carried with it the responsibilities of defending a more extended front. As stated in the despatch, the length of the original line from which the operations of the British troops took place being already somewhat extended, the commander was forced to ask for French aid in order to hold the ground that had been gained. This assistance was readily accorded. The ground that was won on 25 and 26 September lent itself in many places to defence when well consolidated, and favoured the defeat of any measures of counter-attack. The German, ever accommodating in this respect, made his supreme effort on 8 October, and at all parts of the line except two was repulsed with tremendous loss. The enemy were literally scythed down.

The letter of the previous week will have thrown a little light upon the respective tasks of the gunner, the sapper and of the airman in the preparations that are necessary for success in an operation such as that of 25 September last. Just tribute is paid in the despatch of the Commander to the efforts of these specialists. We have to mourn the loss of many thousands of comrades, but the sorrow is alleviated by the knowledge that we have gained yet more in moral by this victory. It is our business not to be content merely to maintain this ascendancy, but to pray for that political wisdom in our rulers which will ensure to our men a national military system that will give over-power to our arms and carry with it that increase of moral force which is the deciding factor in war. A halting, hesitating policy will wreck the spirit of the finest Army. As Scharnhorst said in April, 1806: "Never are moral forces at rest: they fall as soon as they no longer strive to increase."

A LESSON FROM THE WAR DEBATE.

The Halls of our Legislature are seldom the seat of a confessional. After 15 months of war the scales have fallen from the eyes of the Prime Minister, and he has thought fit to acknowledge that all has not been conducted for the best welfare of our arms and for the set

national purpose to which we are committed. In admitting personal responsibility for the long record of shortcomings Mr. Asquith will be certain to receive generous criticism from his political supporters, but the thinking public will question with reason why, after repeated failures and costly experiences, measures were not taken months ago to recognise that a directing head in our War Council was wanting. No more deplorable confession of absence of co-ordination, both in policy and combined naval and military strategy, has ever been wrung from a Minister than in the sad story unfolded of the venture to the Dardanelles. That was an experience of eight months ago. Have we profited thereby? After 15 months of war Mr. Asquith has himself, in adumbrating new proposals, pronounced the past incapacity of his methods of waging successful war. "I attach very great importance first of all to a more complete and intimate co-ordination between the staffs of the various Allied Powers—and we have had a very happy illustration of the advantage of that in our recent deliberations with General Joffre—and also a more intimate and regular interchange of views by some form of combination with the staffs not only of the War Office and the Admiralty but with those who conduct our diplomatic affairs. It is impossible to carry on these things in watertight compartments. You must have co-ordination, contact close, constant, practical, continuing. Those are the general outlines—these are the views I desire to express to the House in regard to our position."

These same views in more forcible language have been impressed in the pages of the SATURDAY REVIEW for the past fifteen months. They form the very basic principles for the direction of war.

We are committed to a fresh overseas effort, not only as a matter of honour to retrieve a pledge to a brave Ally, but to re-establish prestige and possibly to meet a threat which aims to wreck our Empire. It will demand a mighty effort. We share the task and burden with Allies. Unless the land and sea forces that are destined for co-operation in the venture are placed under one head, with a single aim in policy and a single view of strategy, the operations will tend to drag on in the senseless, aimless manner that we have for so long endured. We have at hand a tried military leader who, if given *carte blanche* in his demand for ships, men and money, can deal alike with policy and strategy. He is conversant with the deep, subtle machinations that govern the statecraft of Eastern Powers. Who better fitted for the post of Generalissimo and High Commissioner for handling the new Eastern problem than our present Secretary of State for War? Leave him unfettered from the twenty-two links that compose the chain that shackles our commanders and we shall not fear for the result. Surely the hour has come when in tackling the new tremendous burden in the Near East the task should be made muddle-proof.

THE MINISTER OF MUNITIONS AND THE MASTER-GENERAL OF ORDNANCE.

By A. A. B.

IN the "Daily Chronicle" of last Tuesday (2 November) there is a flaming article on the Ministry of Munitions, occupying a whole page, and adorned with inset portraits of the "Go and Push" men, who have gone and pushed the Department of the Master-General of Ordnance, with his staff of engineer and artillery officers, into the coal-hole, and there turned the key on them, meanwhile announcing through the medium of a servile Press that the Go and Push men can save the country, and they only. I hope they will—we certainly want a saviour or two; and I do not wish to undervalue the patriotism and energy of these men. But I have an old-fashioned prejudice in favour of those who have been scientifically trained to their business; and I have

grave doubts whether railway managers, shipowners, doctors, civil engineers, colliery managers, and professors can safely supersede, at a week's notice, officers of the calibre of Sir Stanley von Donop and Generals Guthrie Smith and Scott-Moncrieff. This, however, is not the point on which I write to you to-day. In the "Chronicle" article occur these two sentences: "How well the Ministry has overtaken arrears and expedited production was demonstrated at the recent fighting in France. . . . We do not know what the output of munitions is, but we do know that, owing to the efforts of the Ministry of Munitions, there has been no inadequacy of shells at the front during the recent advance". This is precisely the lie which I thought I had nailed to the counter in your last issue.

In the SATURDAY REVIEW of 30 October I wrote: "It may surprise your readers to learn that the satisfactory quantity of ammunition sent to France at the date mentioned" (by the "Times" of 21 October) "was not assisted by a single round for either gun or rifle received from orders placed by the Minister of Munitions". Not to read the SATURDAY REVIEW is foolish, but it is not a crime or even a misdemeanour. I do not find it in my heart to blame the writer in the "Daily Chronicle" for uttering nonsense, as he disarms criticism by admitting that he knows nothing of the subject. Besides, if journalists only wrote what they knew, newspapers would cease to exist, and the Press Lords would be ruined. But what are we to say to the Minister of Munitions, who does know the facts?

At the end of the article in the "Daily Chronicle" is printed the following announcement: "The Ministry of Munitions does not object to the publication of the article, but takes no responsibility for the statements which it contains".

I stated a week ago that the satisfactory quantity of ammunition supplied to the troops in France during the recent advance was not due to orders placed by the Minister of Munitions—it was, indeed, physically impossible that it should be so—but to orders given by the Department of the Master-General of the Ordnance. That statement is either true or untrue. If it is untrue, let Mr. Lloyd George or one of his numerous secretaries contradict it. I am quite sure that the statement has already been put before him by the attendant sprite whose duty it is to go through his Press cuttings. If my statement is true, how can Mr. Lloyd George allow the Press to go on, week after week, giving him the praise which is due to Sir Stanley von Donop? An instant's pressure on an electric bell and five minutes' dictation to a typist would suffice to set the matter right. Is it too much to ask of the Minister of Munitions that he should spare a few crumbs from his daily feast of flattery? I only ask him to turn aside for a few seconds from his task to do an act of bare justice to a group of devoted and distinguished officers.

MIDDLE ARTICLES. THE LURE OF THE EAST.

By J. HOLLAND ROSE.

WE all know the lines in which Matthew Arnold hymned the triumph of the introspective East over the hustling West—

"The East bow'd low before the blast
In patient, deep disdain;
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again."

But we are apt to take them as fine poetry, remote

from the realm of fact. Yet it is literally true that the great efforts of Europe against Asia have almost always ended in complete disaster. When viewed by its permanent results, the invasion of Persia and North India by Alexander the Great was a brilliant failure. The Romans never made a lasting impression on the lands beyond the Euphrates, and, indeed, suffered some of their worst rebuffs in that quarter. The religious zeal and hardihood of the Crusaders availed little against the climate and the stubborn fanaticism of the Levant. Venice, Portugal, and Holland were content to nibble profitably at the extremities of Asia. But it was reserved for their more powerful successors, the French and British, to extend their sway inland with success, for the newcomers had the advantage which neither Greeks, Romans, nor Crusaders had possessed; they attacked Asia from its weak side, the Bay of Bengal, and spread up the river valleys. To the Power which held the sea that enterprise was comparatively easy, as against races who loathed "the black water". But it differed *toto calo* from the efforts of Alexander and Crassus. To conquer Southern Asia by a march through Mesopotamia and Persia is the most difficult of military undertakings. Even to hold Palestine and part of Syria was beyond the power either of the Crusaders or of Bonaparte, and for the same general reason. It is a question of keeping open your communications so as to replace the wastage always incident to campaigning in a trying and often pestilential climate.

In view of these facts, how shall we explain the fascination which the idea of the conquest of the East has always exerted upon adventurous minds? In part, of course, the difficulty of the enterprise is its charm; and the ease of Alexander's conquest has often attracted inconsiderate admirers into his footsteps. They forget that, since the day of the Macedonian, the rise of the Moslem creed has made an enormous difference to the peoples that lay on his track, endowing them with a unity of feeling and a fervour of belief entirely absent in the ancient world. Bonaparte in 1798 sought to gain them over by somewhat shallow artifices, which only aroused amused contempt; but to the end of his days he retained a keen sense of the grandeur of the conquest of the East, and he lauded the Moslem faith as the fruitful parent of brave fighters. "The East awaits a man" was the burden of several of his utterances at St. Helena; and probably of all his regrets none was more poignant than his inability in 1808 to undertake, along with the Tsar Alexander I., the partition of the Turkish Empire which the two potentates then eagerly discussed. In this connection it is worth remembering that Napoleon, in occupying South Italy, Corfu, and Spain, always had in view a revival of the Eastern enterprise cut short by Nelson at Aboukir; and the naval resources of Italy and Spain were to assist him in settling about the partition with armed resources at least equal to those of the Tsar. The rising of the Spaniards in 1808 put an end to what was perhaps the best opportunity in modern times for effecting the conquest of the East. But how long would Alexander and Napoleon have agreed as to the sharing of the spoils? And which of them would have retained Constantinople, a question on which they never came to an agreement?

Full early in his life Kaiser William felt the call of the East. As a student at Bonn he expressed a longing to visit Egypt, and the keen interest which he even then took in ships and in the revival of the German Navy pointed in that direction. As Kaiser he soon showed the connection between *Weltpolitik* and expansion in the Levant. In 1896 he proclaimed the world-wide aims of the future German Empire. In 1897 he refused to join other civilised Powers in protesting against Abdul Hamid's policy of massacre in Macedonia and Armenia. In the autumn of 1898 he journeyed to Constantinople and fraternised with the crowned Butcher; and, proceeding to Jerusalem and Damascus, he finally declared his resolve ever to

champion the interests of the 300,000,000 Mohammedans. This, we may admit, was a far more skilful way of initiating his Eastern policy than was Bonaparte's youthful rush against Egypt; and William further showed his practical sense by preparing for a through railway to the East. The Bagdad and Hedjaz Railways, together with proprietary rights over the districts which they served, enabled him to fasten his grip upon the spinal cord of Asia Minor, and also to mature schemes which would facilitate either the pouring of Anatolian levies into Europe or of Austrian and German troops into Mesopotamia or the districts near the Suez Canal. The railway, when completed (if possible to Koweit on the Persian Gulf), would expedite the passage of troops from Central Europe into Mesopotamia or the Sinaitic Peninsula. It would then be as important a strategic achievement as the Trans-Siberian Railway according to the original scheme. Given the subjection of Serbia, and the reduction of Bulgaria and Turkey to a state of vassalage, the Central Empires would have the best opportunity ever vouchsafed to great military Powers for the conquest of the Levant and Mesopotamia. So long as all the intervening lands remain faithful, or at least passive, in their vassalage, the difficulties of communications, fatal to earlier invaders, are solved.

The condition is a somewhat exacting one, for no one has ever yet held in complete subjection all the lands from Belgrade to the Persian Gulf. But, granting that such an overlordship may possibly in the future be achieved by the Germans and Austrians, will they have come within shooting distance of their goals? Will either Egypt or India be within their grasp? Let experience and common sense answer. Even the comparatively narrow desert east of the Suez Canal has always proved a difficult obstacle; and its difficulty is now enhanced by the construction of the Canal and the dependence of an invader on heavy artillery and pontoons. A surprise is or ought to be impossible in this age of aeroplanes. So that a feat which was possible in the days of the Assyrians is to-day impracticable against well-equipped and active defenders. Improved locomotion may help an invader up to a certain point; but difficulties of transport and of crossing a mighty fosse thenceforth ought to be insuperable. As to a German invasion of India by way of Persia and Beluchistan, England could desire nothing more. No better way could be devised of throwing away armies on an enterprise which considerations of transport now place on an altogether different plane from the march of Alexander the Great. It still remains true that the Sea Power will say the last word on all attempts to conquer Egypt or India by land. That Germany and her Allies, in case of complete success in the Balkans, should be rash enough to undertake either enterprise is a consummation devoutly to be wished, for the Orient remains, what it has ever been, a devourer of invaders who come by land. The lure of the East is the most potent incentive that has led vaulting ambition to o'erleap itself.

BIG DRUMS AND PENNY WHISTLES.

WHILE at the Front drums are beating and flags flying, away at the base are men waiting—men in arms, men in hospital, men to whom "the Front" means very much or very little—whole cities of men, cities of wood or canvas, of hotels and casinos and villas turned from old ways into new, but cities all the same, and full to overflowing with men—and ministering angels. Together a world of splendid souls: human enough, God knows, but one and all making the offering greater than which no man's love knoweth.

To this world has come the Young Men's Christian Association—familiarily called the "Y.M.C.A.", or even the "Y.M." They have come in the material shape of Huts. These with a splendid daring they have planted (I have the fear of the Censor before me)

over a fairly big district of France. Jolly, spacious, well-designed wood buildings they are, some seventy or eighty feet in length, with a bar at one end where every conceivable kind of simple "comfort" can be bought, with beyond—a kitchen, not very large, perhaps, but fabulously effective, whence issue all manner of delectably and daintily prepared dishes. In the main part of the hut are tables and chairs, newspapers and writing-paper, perhaps a billiard table, and at the end opposite to the bar (and here we come to our penny whistles) a small stage and piano. And it is of that little stage and piano—and of these only in their lighter aspects—that we wish to speak. Of the Y.M.C.A.'s real work, of the noble aims and splendid unselfishness inspiring it—of that, indeed, we had more than a glimpse; but that fine theme cannot be ours to-day.

But if by "penny whistles" the reader will be good enough to understand amusement and relaxation of the mind, he will see that the little stage at the end of the huts—and the piano—can have a light as well as a serious use. For it is the policy of the Y.M.C.A. to provide simple entertainments in the shape of music, and latterly a few simple plays. And under the auspices of distinguished people at home this has been easily done. Various parties have been organised in London and despatched to the Y.M.C.A., who take them in, look after them with the greatest courtesy and consideration, and conduct them hither and thither, wherever their services are desirable. And, while bearing all the cost and trouble of this, the Y.M.C.A. by no means keep their parties only to their own huts. Almost as a matter of course hospitals and convalescent homes are included in the day's programme—to say nothing of special entertainments to nurses, Red Cross drivers, or transport workers, audiences in a sense (but in no sense recognised by the Y.M.C.A.) a little out of the scope of the Association's work. It is as the leader of one of these parties, just returned from France, that the writer has begged the indulgence of the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW to record some impressions of a visit which he, and those with him, will never forget.

Again the Censor! We were in France—may I say no more? A party of eight (five ladies and three men), with a repertoire of four plays, two musical artists and one "with songs at the piano", and prepared to act too. So for the humans. But we "travelled" also (I beg the non-professional reader to note that word) a theatrical hamper of the most generous proportions (full of costumes and small "props") and two biggish wooden contraptions, things of the most tantalising mystery to all and sundry, tied up in canvas bags, heavy yet not heavy, and to be watched over with fear and trembling by our stage manager whenever in "non-professional" hands ("Gently, boys—gently, boys", I think I hear him saying). Released from their wrappings, these affairs of paint, canvas and triple-ply would, and did, assume the shape of (1) a cupboard some six feet high with neatly closing door, and (2) a copper, with all suitable opening and "top" and a quite cunning little trap door to admit to the "fire". It is not to be understood that these desirable articles assumed their shapes at a word of command or at the touching of a button; no little cleverness indeed was required to unravel them and build them up and bolt them together, but this cleverness also we "travelled" in the shape of one of our party who united in himself the graces of the comedian with the skill (and zeal) of a property-master and stage manager. Without him I doubt if these "props" would have found themselves on the stage with the speed they did—indeed, so rapid and accomplished was he, I believe he would sometimes finish the riveting and clamping after the play had begun—just for the love of it—miraculously fixing handles and hinges while pretending to cook an omelette or dust the china. His coadjutor was untiring, too, but I never detected in him this virtuosos spirit. The hamper and its filling and unfilling fell to the same incomparable pair—and out of it, with absolutely unfailing certainty, came our costumes and a host of little "props"—letters, telegrams, newspapers, etc.—all in their places and ready for immediate

use. And this, it must be remembered, sometimes three times a day. Never once was a costume or part of a costume missing, or a property out of the way.

Our first entertainment was in the afternoon to wounded French soldiers, and consisted solely of songs and violin solos. Our singers were naturally a little anxious about singing English songs to an audience who knew not a word of English, but their alarms were needless, and the lady "at the piano" with songs frankly comic and very English had the first of the ovations that afterwards were to greet her everywhere. "You have only to look at her", said one of the men. That night we began what was to prove the usual routine of our tour, and I cannot do better than describe it in some little detail, for though no two days and no two journeys were alike, these two entertainments will give an idea of our fortunate and happy mission.

Imagine us, then, about half-past five, mounting two motor-cars, a little ambulance, or carrier car, having preceded us with the three heavy "props." I have described. We are whisked off into the country to Camp A. The name probably means nothing to us. It is soon dark, and we fly along the unfamiliar land, not knowing if we are travelling north, south, east or west, or whether we have two miles to travel or ten. Soon we are in pine woods and over country we feel must be beautiful if only we could see it. Presently the cars pull up. Out of the darkness looms the faintly lit hut, and in a moment friendly faces are about us and we and our belongings are translated to the stage and some improvised dressing-rooms behind it. The audience has been waiting an hour or two, and is crowding the entrances and sitting in the big windows. Our bill for this particular show is already decided upon; one of us who is free distributes programmes, and our stage manager rapidly gets all ready. Crockery, knives and forks, etc., are readily lent by the superintendent of the hut; nay, such-props. as a real stew and a roly-poly pudding, hot water in kettle, buckets, cans, all are promptly and enthusiastically forthcoming. At 6.30 we ring our bell and announce the first item in our programme. After the first piece follows music, after that a second play, and with the singing of "God Save the King" our entertainment is concluded. Then comes the real work again—the packing of the hamper, the taking to pieces of the cupboard, etc., the hurried re-loading into the cars, and in fifteen or twenty minutes we are off in our cars to Camp B., broilingly, meltingly hot and muffled to our eyes in overcoats and scarves.

Arrived at B we find another waiting crowd. We hurry within the hut, and are soon started as before—save that now we reverse the order of the two plays with a view to lessening the delays of preparation, the changing and making-up. Here, too, we find a fine new stew awaiting—with a very rigorously tied up roly-poly pudding, the subsequent business with which added considerably to the gaiety of nations. Soon we are singing "God Save the King" again. Again we pack up, muffle ourselves like mummies, remount our cars, and journey back to our hotel quite ready for supper at half-past ten. Each of our entertainments has taken exactly an hour and a half; unpacking and packing has consumed another hour and our travelling perhaps an hour—five hours' "work", three hours of play, and a night to live in our memories for ever.

Sometimes we gave three entertainments in the day, when the first was probably in the ward of a hospital and was limited to one play and music—an hour's entertainment. To save unnecessary carting of the heavy "props." our stage manager always tried (and very seldom failed in his purpose) to visit in the morning the hospital we were to go to in the afternoon, seeing the stage and thus being able to report as to its possibilities for our more elaborate (!) pieces. Were the stage very small we had two little sketches which could be played almost on a handkerchief, and a very useful part of our repertoire they were, for we could play them either as the sole theatrical part of the programme when the stage was very small or add them anywhere if we found at the last moment that a little longer programme would be acceptable.

I don't think we worked any miracles—I wish I could tell of the blind seeing or the dumb speaking—perhaps these things happened beyond our ken. Our programme was made up of the simplest and least pretentious of pieces—we had no sentiment (or very, very little), certainly no love-making: we drove home no soul-stirring truths. We went to amuse, and only to amuse, and as I look back upon our shows I cannot feel we failed. But this is not to say we found it easy to find the right plays. It would have been far easier to find (and to play) "clever" modern plays, plays with their morals rather subtly hidden away, or plays with smart people and smart clothes—or very drab people with very drab clothes—and ideals. But we had had some experience with camp entertainments at home, and had come to the conclusion that nothing was so suitable as the best type of old farce. But how difficult it is to find that type only those who have sought for it know.

In our thirteen working days we gave thirty entertainments and produced fifty-one plays. In addition, two members of our company, apart from their share in the main programme, would sometimes go and sing and play the violin in other wards of the hospital while the acting was in progress in the main ward. So the actual hours of the afternoon and evening were busy—and quite extraordinarily interesting. To the officials of the Y.M.C.A. we cannot be sufficiently grateful. Their consideration and helpfulness—to say nothing of their praise and encouragement—were as much beyond our expectation as they exceeded our deserts. For—and this must never be forgotten—the "penny whistles" are a very small fraction of their work, scarcely indeed touching its fringe. Still they have their uses, and as one of the players who had the privilege—and a very real privilege he felt it—to play upon them, and though only for so short a time, the present writer is thankful to record his gratitude, for himself and for all his party.

THE MUSICAL CROAKERS.

By JOHN F. RUNCIMAN.

A SAD autumn evening with wet clouds and a rising wind, and the fitful glories of the setting sun seen across the grey sky-rifts—here we have a picture for painters, an engaging background for the purveyors of mawkish drawing-room ballads, and a perfect symbolic representation of English music as that subject is viewed by many writers to-day. "Let us be gay", cries Mr. Joseph Holbrooke; "we are not alive and never shall be; but that is no reason for giving up hope". Mr. Edwin Evans is equally cheerful: "... British music continues to travel round its vicious circle. Composers are dispirited because the public is apathetic, and the public is apathetic because composers lack spirit. Yet the music itself is improving year by year". I do Mr. Evans an injustice. He is not merely as cheerful as the rest of the prophets: he is at the same time both less so and more so. Things are as bad as bad can be, and there is no ground for hoping they will ever be better; yet we need not despond, for they are gradually improving. Our composers do not produce any better music because of the public apathy; but in spite of the public apathy they produce better music. Delius and Holbrooke have composed no better music in 1915 than they did last year; yet they have composed better music. Or has Mr. Edwin Evans discovered a new sort of music that produces itself and "is improving year by year"? I suggest that it is time to be done with all this. When I think of some of my own articles, and of this latest declaration of Mr. Evans, and of some of Mr. Holbrooke's terrific denunciations of the public and the critics, I wonder what it is precisely that we want. Or, rather, I know, vaguely. We long for a glorious flowering time of British musical art, an epoch in which gorgeous music will be produced every day of the week all the year round, music which will be hailed with immediate rapture by a regenerated popu-

lace. Beautiful dream! Was there ever such an era of unending spring? I fancy that Shakespeare grumbled about the apathetic public. I know that Mozart died a pauper and that Beethoven was beaten in his own city by Rossini; I know that Gounod's "Faust" proved at first a failure, and that Bizet's "Carmen" was in the composer's lifetime only a *succès d'estime*. Great art and good art on a lower level, "Tristan" and "Carmen", came forth with or without the inspiring influence of the populace; bad art and worse art, "La Bohème" and "Tosca" need that fostering influence. This is mere cold fact. We have been theorising too much. Messrs. Holbrooke and Evans base their theories on history as it is written; and historians have based their history on preconceived theoretical notions. Fact is a bombshell that will not dislodge Mr. Holbrooke or Mr. Evans or any historian from his stronghold of theory; they all regard fact as a kind of asphyxiating gas which it is unfair to use—so they survive it by ignoring it, which is a good plan when practicable. For my part, I mean, so far as I can, to stick to fact; and the fact in the present case is that if our composers can write a "Nibelung's Ring" they will do it without thinking of the public, but if they everlastingly think of the public first they will never compose anything less contemptible than "Madame Butterfly".

I do not wish to harp too long on one string, but let me ask our musical pessimists this: Is music much worse off than the other arts? I know one or two men who have written fine poetry, and no one buys it; Ella Wheeler Wilcox has hundreds of thousands of admirers. I know one man, at any rate, who wrote and published a good novel and no one noticed it; Mr. Charles Garvice has his thousands of devoted readers; and I have before me a novel by an authoress, a work in which a young English attaché is attaché-d to an embassy in London, in which the characters described as witty are never witty nor those humorous who are described as humorous; in which a murder is committed in a house and the mistress, much upset, goes to bed, first asking someone to fetch the coroner in the morning—the title-page bears the simple device, "67th thousand". I know several painters who have done splendid work; it does not sell, but a canvas representing a doctor sitting in his handsomely appointed consulting-room and telling a gloomy young man his future prospects brought thousands of pounds. Does Mr. Holbrooke want to be a Collier, a Helen Mather, an Ella Wheeler Wilcox? I think not. He need not, like Charles Lamb, "damn posterity", and threaten to write only for antiquity; Mozart uttered the same thought more nobly and more simply when he said he wrote "Don Giovanni" for himself and a few friends.

Having, like the Irishman of commercial journalism, strayed far from a road I had not yet taken, let me confess that the genesis of the above remarks lay in a performance of "Carmen" at the Shaftesbury Theatre and one at the same place of Puccini's "Tosca". "Carmen"—the tale is re-told from day to day in its proper place, the dailies, where tales have to be told—"Carmen" was at first a failure. As I have intimated, it was not a failure, but a middling success—*comme ça, comme ça*, "well, a bit of a hit if you like". Bizet was not at all dispirited. He had done his work without waiting for public apathy to subside or even to manifest itself; he had done his work without thinking of the "vicious circle" and the remainder of the imaginary obstacles of our native composers, and having done it he watched the result with a certain curiosity, not with regard to the opera itself, but about the public. He was justified. Gradually the world has realised that here in this work of Bizet there is a breath of the divine air that makes things last. "Carmen" does not go on like, say, the music of Purcell, by virtue of something analogous to the sap of an everlasting tree that remains green all the year round and through many years: rather it has some of the hard imperishability of the diamond. It glitters and sparkles—is, indeed,

about the most brilliant of all operas; it rarely touches one at all and never moves us deeply, but still it has the enduring quality in it. The cruel passion of it seems artificial at times because of the overvehemence with which it is expressed; but it must be genuine passion, or we should have seen through the sham long ere now. The characters in it are real characters, however crude they may be—Escamillo, Carmen, Don José, and Michaela cannot be confounded with the Ferdinandos and Mirandas of everyday Italian opera. To me the other day the thing seemed as fresh under the bâton of Mr. Landon Ronald as it did to me many years ago when I first heard it directed by old Arditì. I need hardly say that in gorgeousness of mounting neither Mr. Beecham nor Mr. Courtneidge left anything to be desired, and they achieved a fine artistic and, I trust, pecuniary success.

How different is the case with "La Tosca"! The more money that is spent on that lady the more tawdry she appears. I have said so much about the opera, both recently and years ago, that I have no patience to deal with it at any length to-day. I mention it because according to the dicta of Mr. Holbrooke, Mr. Evans, and a score of others it ought to be a great work; it has commanded the admiration of millions. But is it worth while having a promising "Young Italy" movement if all the outcome of it is to be a "Tosca"? No; as I sat hearing fine singers doing their best, a splendid orchestra and competent conductor doing their best, I felt more and more strongly that such music is not worth writing, and certainly not worth producing by a pioneer of the finest of the most novel music. If Mr. Holbrooke wants the success he asks for let him follow in the steps of Puccini; but he, and all the other younger Englishmen, will do better for themselves in the long run if they follow in the steps of Mozart.

PERMANENCE.

GOD, for His bow above the storm, has set
The infinite quiet of the countryside:

There are glades in the honey-scented chestnut-woods
Where still the old steadfast, simple loves abide.

There is silence there: the music of falling rain:
There is calm, and the sun's bright patterns through
the trees:

Among the hazels next year's catkins hang.
Safe at her bosom sleeps the earth's increase.

God, for His bow, above the storm has set
Nature the fatalist, level-browed, most wise:
Death in her hands she bears, beneficent.
Beyond the snow she wakes the anemones.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MINISTER OF MUNITIONS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

1 November 1915.

SIR,—I have read with great pleasure what you have very properly described as the "just and powerful" article of "A. A. B." in the SATURDAY REVIEW of 30 October. The Army will, I feel sure, be grateful to the civilian who has had the courage to make this spirited and manly defence of a much maligned Department. Between the respective recollections of Lord Haldane and Mr. Lloyd George I am not in a position to judge; but I think the Army will still remember Lord Haldane's generous impulse when it has forgotten Mr. Lloyd George's want of magnanimity.

A great deal of nonsense has been written in certain sections of the Press of this country during the last six

months, not only about the shortage of munitions but about Mr. Lloyd George himself. When the shortage first became known one journal, politically opposed before the war to Mr. Lloyd George and all his ways, completely lost its head and went even so far as to declare roundly that had he been appointed War Minister last August year instead of Lord Kitchener none of this shortage would have occurred!

We know to-day that even as Minister of Munitions Mr. Lloyd George has still to win his spurs. We all wish him well, and are glad that he has had a fair field and something of a breathing space. The terrific sledgehammer blows delivered by the Germans on the British Front in the early part of the year were the cause of the original shortage. Had they been continued we might have been faced in October with a shortage even more serious than the shortage in April. Would the writer in the *Times* have, in that event, denounced Mr. Lloyd George, or would he have been forced by circumstances to ascertain the facts?

Indecision and extravagance are supposed to be the besetting sins of the present Government. As to the first, it is difficult to judge, for no one but the members of the Government are in possession of the facts. But as regards the charge of extravagance, it is easier to form an opinion; and, if we are to believe one tithe of the statements made daily wherever men congregate, then the extravagance of the new Ministry of Munitions has out-Heroded Herod! Let us hope, at least, that its efficiency will be commensurate!

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

A SOLDIER.

HELP FOR SERBIA.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Perhaps you are expecting me—a Serbian confronting the problem whether assistance should be rendered to Serbia or no—to set forth the Serbian point of view on this question? I fear your expectation will be disappointed. I cannot give you the Serbian point of view, for I do not think there is one. There is but one—that common to Serbians, Englishmen, and all the Allies. It is comprised in the words: "Help for Serbia!"

If you do not help her your own interests will be seriously prejudiced. Firstly, the enemy will obtain possession of the most important line from Belgrade to Constantinople; in other words, he will be in a position to menace Egypt and India. Secondly, the Serbian Army will be destroyed, and there will be no one left to dispossess him of that line when the favourable moment arrives. Thirdly, Greece and Roumania will not join our Allies and us. Whereas, if the Allies afford us effective help these countries will range themselves on the side of the Entente. Otherwise, they will be found on the side of the victors. Fourthly, you will lose, once for all, the confidence felt in you by the small nations. Are not these sufficient reasons for going to the help of the small, heroic country?

Let it never be said that it is too late. It is not too late at all. Serbia's position is critical, doubtless, but not desperate. Anyone who has been in a campaign knows quite well that there is always a possibility of extricating oneself from such positions. During the Serbo-Turkish War of 1912 a company of Serbians was entirely surrounded by a Turkish battalion. The Serbian officer ordered his men each to hurl two bombs. This they did, and half of the Turkish battalion was killed, the remainder fled, the Serbian company having suffered no loss whatever. Again, in the Serbo-Bulgarian War of 1913 a Serbian regiment was occupying a certain hill. Taking advantage of the fog—a frequent condition in the mountainous district in which the armies were operating—the Bulgarians approached the hill and, when the fog lifted, the Serbian regiment found itself surrounded on three sides by three Bulgarian regiments. What was to be done? To retire in the only direction left open would have been to court certain death. For one regiment

to fight three at once would have meant losing any chance of holding out. The commander decided to attack only one Bulgar regiment, leaving the other two to look after themselves; and his onslaught was so vigorous that one Bulgarian regiment broke while the other two were obliged to retire in order to rescue the one in danger, whilst the Serbian soldiers—who had been meanwhile reinforced—were speedily freed from the attentions of the enemy. To-day the Serbian Army is in a like position, and it, too, will hold out until help arrives. As soon as aid reaches them the whole position will be changed. If the Allies carry a vigorous attack upon the Bulgarians from the south and possibly from the east, do you think that the Bulgars will be able to maintain themselves in the positions they have conquered in the west? Moreover, once freed from the Bulgarian attack, our army will beat Mackensen—of that I am sure.

It is absolutely necessary that England should help Serbia. The powerful Lion must, perforce, save the life of the little Mouse. Nor, as in the fable, will he have long to wait for his reward, for in saving the mouse's life he will be saving his own.

PAVLE POPOVIĆ,
Professor at Belgrade University.

THE FINANCIAL OUTLOOK.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

11 October 1915.

SIR,—As I understand it, the loans issued since the outbreak of the War have already much more than absorbed all the loose savings of the nation, and although large sales of foreign securities have been effected, such sales have been out of proportion to the money required by subscribers to the British War Loan. It is clear that at least £1,000,000,000 will be required by 30 September 1916 if the War goes on so long. Assuming that £500,000,000 was not available in cash—and it seems tolerably certain that nothing like £1,000,000,000 is lying awaiting investment—the problem is how is that money to be paid?

There is only one medium, and that is through the banks. The banks of this country have already about £1,000,000,000 of the public's money in their hands. This money is either lent to other customers who are requiring accommodation in the shape of loans on open account or discounts, or it is invested in securities, home, Colonial, and foreign. A substantial proportion is invested in premises, and a very modest amount is held in cash. If, therefore, the banks of this country are to lend £500,000,000 to would-be investors in new War Loans, they can only do it by calling in monies already lent or realising securities at present held. Inasmuch as the public have not the money to invest in the War Loan, they certainly have not the money to buy securities held by the banks, so that that source is stopped. As to foreign securities, except for America, no nation has money available, and America is already taking as much as she can digest. It means, therefore, that the bankers must add to their balance-sheets an asset in the shape of advances to customers amounting to £500,000,000 secured by the British War Loan. Simultaneously they will add to the debit side of their balance-sheet £500,000,000 deposits held on account of the Government. As the Government releases this money to pay the contractors on account of provisions, munitions, etc., the £500,000,000 will become split up among the various banks, and appear to the credit of parties to whom the Government is indebted for the supplies mentioned. The interesting part of it all is, however, that in the meantime the supply of gold will not have increased materially, therefore the proportion between the liabilities of the bankers to the public and the actual amount of liquid assets they have automatically diminishes.

At present the average holdings of the bankers of England is about 15 per cent. of their liabilities to the

public in respect to deposits and balances on current accounts. If anything like £500,000,000 is added to their liabilities to the public in respect to deposits and current account balances during the next twelve months, then the ratio of cash to liabilities shrinks sharply to 10 per cent. or less.

The whole basis, therefore, of the economic fabric in the future is more and more confidence, and nothing but the confidence of the nation in its own ability to win through will maintain the credit of the country.

In the meantime the great problem would be to maintain our foreign exchanges on a proper basis. At an early stage of the War it has been necessary to raise £100 million at an unprecedentedly high rate of interest. It will be necessary to increase this £100 million by many millions at an even higher rate of interest until we have a debt to the United States of £500 million or more. This can be liquidated to some extent conceivably by the sale of American securities held by this country, and, when something like normal conditions are restored, perhaps the whole debt can be extinguished by getting the British public who hold American securities to transfer them to the Anglo-French loan. Looking at the matter superficially, that should adjust the situation to a normal level; and, once this country is restored to its old position as a great exporter, the "balance of trade" will be quickly established, and the exchange settled once more at par.

Assuming that at the end of the War the total indebtedness of £3,000,000,000 has been accrued. According to pre-War conditions the whole amount would be cleared off out of ten years' national savings, as it is estimated that the annual amount saved in this country up to the outbreak of the War was £300,000,000 or over. If by extraordinarily heavy taxation that £300,000,000 is extracted from the pockets of the public over ten years, we stand clear at the end of that time. This, however, would mean that the fresh enterprise that is only possible out of national savings would be put an end to. Vast sums which at present open up new channels of business throughout the world would be devoted to the reduction of the National Debt. The country would become poorer steadily, and the very savings which we bargain for in order to settle existing debts would cease to accrue on the old scale.

The future seems to me to depend upon the acumen and boldness, in grappling with entirely new and unprecedented conditions, of the very few men to whom are entrusted to-day the direction of the finances of the world. If, entirely mistrustful of the extension of credit that has resulted from the War, there is a concerted endeavour to restrict credit, then industries will languish for want of necessary capital, and the waste of war will be irreparable for want of facilities to bring to life again languishing industries. Then our case will be bad indeed.

I think it is probable, however, that we shall quickly settle down to a condition of owing thousands of millions instead of hundreds of millions. The redemption of indebtedness will be spread over many generations, and, although taxation will be considerably higher, I think it will be nothing at all approaching to the strain upon the community that many of our financial Jeremiahs are predicting.

We are said to have a total national income of £2,200,000,000. With a little concentration of effort, it is not so very difficult to increase one's profits by 10 per cent., and it is perfectly certain that, if this nation comes out of the war in a really serious frame of mind, its productive power can be increased, not by 10 per cent. only, but by 20 per cent. *If once the labouring classes can be brought to realise that the proper thing to strike for is a right to work to the utmost of their capacity and not merely to the lowest minimum of their ability, we can very easily carry the additional burden which an extra £3,000,000,000 of debt involves—after all, only £150,000,000 a year—*

particularly if the result of the War is absolute, and world-wide confidence in the future is established.

I daresay the professional economist would bowl me over very badly, but I do not think the expert is worth much in these days, as he is working without precedent.

Yours, etc.,
A FINANCIER.

GETTING THE MEN.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Croydon,

2 November 1915.

SIR,—There was an article in "Punch" a week or two ago entitled "To Get the Men". It started with the following: "The great conscriptionist controversy is entering upon a new phase. The burning question of the moment would appear to be whether the necessary men are to be compelled to volunteer or persuaded to be compulsorily enrolled". This statement describes exactly the present situation. Were it not all so pitiable, Lord Derby's scheme—viewed in the light of its being one to give the voluntary (?) system a last chance—would be one of the most highly amusing comedies the world has ever seen. Let it not be thought, however, that I wish Lord Derby's scheme to end in failure; nobody could possibly wish that; but to anyone with even a moderate allowance of intelligence it is apparent that the voluntary system is dead—not that it ever lived, as a system.

The simple fact that Lord Derby is determined to get the men entirely does away with voluntary enlistment. Where is the difference—if a man yield to the force of persuasion or to the force of law? The whole affair is too absurd for words.

The present scheme is neither conscription nor voluntarism, but something between the two, with a more or less pronounced list towards the former. As such it is a sure sign of weakness and indecision on the part of the Government. It is said that this country will not "stand" conscription. If this is so, one is compelled to admit that the patriotism of the British people is of an exceedingly flimsy nature. For after all what does conscription mean? It means that you may, sooner or later, be forced to die for your country. What is there to rebel against in this if you really love your country? Love is unconditional. It might be said that the British are so patriotic that they do not need conscription. Even if they were the most patriotic people in the world conscription would be necessary in order to put military affairs on a properly organised basis. The ancient Greeks were the most ardent patriots of whom history tells, and they had conscription. But has it been proved that the British people as a whole would not stand conscription? It has not. It is certain parties in the Liberal section of the Government who have poisoned the minds of the public against this necessary measure. The trade unionists might certainly have something to say in the matter, but for the Government to seek to avoid friction in that quarter is useless; the day of open conflict between them is bound to come sooner or later. Trade unions ought never to have been allowed to come into existence; it is taking hold of the stick of reform by the wrong end. However, that is beside the point under discussion.

Another favourite argument of the voluntarists is that a voluntary man fights better than a conscript. This statement is an absolute lie, and as such is extremely insulting to our Allies, who have fought every bit as bravely as our own men. Did our sailors in the days of the press-gang—which was compulsion with a vengeance—fight any the less bravely than now? Everyone who has read history knows that this was not at all the case.

Let us hope this senseless talk of voluntarism will soon die away into eternal silence.

Yours, etc.,
LESLIE H. IDIENS.

BRIBING THE SOLDIERS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

50, Rotherwick Road

Golder's Green, N.W.,

27 October 1915.

SIR,—To what depth has England fallen when people may address to her insults of the kind suggested by S. M. Mitra in letters to the SATURDAY REVIEW! That those suggestions are offered in good faith, and with the best of motives, one cannot doubt; but lest his unfortunate zeal should again lead him into similar pitfalls, perhaps S. M. Mitra will try to remember that no true Englishman would accept a bribe for the performance of his duty, and no Englishwoman would supply the money for such a purpose.

I am, Sir,

Faithfully yours,

MILDRED PALMER.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF CRIME.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

1 November 1915.

SIR,—There is, I suppose, a certain brotherhood of crime which links together as it were all the great criminals of history with one infamous family, and the characteristics which they share are no doubt repeated in successive ages, so that we should not be surprised at finding that the most depraved spirits of the past have their counterpart even in these days of enlightened Teutonic culture.

Two such figures stand out in lurid relief against the background of mediæval history, and in the following quotation from Professor Villari's "Life and Times of Savonarola" I think the present-day analogy is not far to seek.

"The Borgian Pontiff" (Alexander VI.), he writes, "with his devouring ambition to create principalities for his children, turned a greedy eye on every feeble and timid potentate; he made and unmade treaties, alliances, and solemn engagements, and was ready to expose Italy and the whole of Europe to catastrophe, in order to gain his ends.

"No less dangerous was the temper of Ludovico, the Moor, for he was equally dominated by fear and ambition. His duplicity and bad faith were notorious throughout Italy; he concluded treaties only to violate them at the first opportunity; sometimes indeed in the act of signing them he was scheming how best to break the contract should it seem expedient to do so. He prided himself on being the craftiest man in Italy, and was incessantly weaving fresh designs and fresh plots in order to strengthen his sovereignty and increase his power. And when suffering from attacks of fear all his mental faculties were quickened and developed a kind of spasmodic activity, so that at these moments it was impossible for anyone to foretell what he would decide to do next.

"Unfortunately, both for himself and Italy, he was a prey to fear at the time of which we are now speaking, and consequently in a state of continual suspense."

Professor Villari adds a footnote from the "Mémoires" of Philippe de Commines: "Le dit seigneur Ludovic estoit homme très sage, mais fort craintif, et bien souple quand il avait peur (J'en parle comme de celui que j'ai connu et beaucoup de choses traitée avec lui) et homme sans foy s'il voyait son profit pour la rompre."

Yours obediently,

M.

THE MOUSEHUNT.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Wastdale, P.O. Rankin's Pass,

Nylstroom, Transvaal.

SIR,—With reference to the "Mousehunt": the "taal" word "muishond" is the Boer name for the polecat. The "animal very similar to the weasel" referred to by Mr. Pearce in your issue of 21 August is probably the "meerkat", of which there are several species.

My Dutch-English dictionary gives "bunzing" as Dutch for "polecat", and renders "meerkat" as "monkey, ape, baboon", and "muishond" as "mousing-dog".

But the relation of "Dutch as she is spoke" to the dictionary is small and diminishing.

Yours faithfully,

C. R. PRANCE.

REVIEWS.

A GATE OF THE WEST COUNTRY.

(REVIEWED BY BISHOP FRODSHAM.)

"Bath and Bristol." By Stanley Hutton. A. and C. Black. 7s. 6d. net.

ALTHOUGH Bath has been allowed priority in the title, the major part of this book is concerned with Bristol. This is a welcome innovation. Bath has never lacked chroniclers nor admirers, but Bristol has not been served half so well as it deserves. Writing earlier in this year, Lord Rosebery, with his customary felicity of phrase, asserted that there was "not an ignoble street in Bath", nor one that failed to appeal "with all the force of architecture and embodied history". So much could not be said truthfully of Bristol. Parts of the city are squalid or unlovely to the last degree, and yet there remains much to delight the eye and to stir the imagination. "Her stately towers, her spacious squares, her noble almshouses, and her gull-haunted waterways intersecting the very heart of the city, are overwhelming evidence . . . that Bristol is indeed no mean city, that behind her is a great and storied past."

Mr. Stanley Hutton, although he acknowledges the great antiquity of Bristol, does very little to elucidate the distant past. The pre-Celts, to use the fashionable title for the neolithic men who inhabited Britain from very early days, appear to have been comparatively numerous in Gloucestershire. Although there are neither long nor round barrows remaining near Bristol, there is not lacking evidence that earlier earthworks were utilised by the Romans for their camps. A notable example once existed at Clifton, but, alas, it has been destroyed, partly to obtain an approach to the suspension bridge, partly for public paths. The modern builder has destroyed what the Romans left. Probably, however, far more was destroyed during the Saxon invasion, which Freeman called "the most fearful blow that ever fell on any nation". It would be only guesswork to surmise whether the pre-Celts and the Brythons passed between the river path of Clifton to use Bristol as a gateway into Britain. There can be little doubt that the Saxons did. *Brycg-stow*, or bridge-land, the Saxons called the place, but there was doubtless an earlier name, just as the camp at Clifton appears from Celtic records to have been known as *Caer Oder*. The Saxons destroyed the peoples and their tongues. The land they called after their own names. From *Brycg-stow* they swept inland, deluging the country with blood. And later on the Northmen used the same gateway of the West.

Of later days Mr. Stanley Hutton has many interesting things to tell, for, if invaders entered into England at Bristol, adventurers passed out by the same gate in a constant stream to the distant parts of the earth, and particularly to North America. John Jay, merchant and sheriff, who now sleeps in St. Mary Redcliffe, appears to have anticipated his fellow-citizens by sending out in the year 1480 "two ships of eighty tons burthen in search of the New Brazils and Far Cathay." Then came the Cabots, father and sons, from Venice to Bristol. In 1497, backed by local merchants, John, Lewis, Sebastian, and Sanctus Cabot embarked in their little ship, the "Matthew", to find Newfoundland, and, incidentally, to lay the foundations of England's maritime supremacy. Sebastian Cabot, not without reason, has been suspected of embroidering the truth, but it is beyond doubt that the Cabot family on 5 March 1496 obtained letters patent from Henry VII., early in May 1497, with ringing of bells and cheers, sailed from Bristol port, and not late in the same summer landed on the American mainland. They thus anticipated great Christopher Columbus by a whole year or more.

From the days of the Cabots Bristol merchants were filled by a passion for "adventures". That daring master mariner, Martin Pring, is an example taken out of many like him. The merchants were behind him financially, although Pring himself speaks of the

"reasonable inducement of Richard Hakluyt, prebendary of the Cathedral". This may be supposed to show that the reverend cosmographer had a monetary share in at least one adventure. Pring, it will be remembered, on that voyage anchored off Whitson, or, as the port was afterwards called, Plymouth. At Plymouth the Pilgrim Fathers landed seventeen years later. Sir Ferdinando Gorges, the father of English colonisation in North America, was another Bristol man. So also was William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania. His father, Admiral Penn, was buried in St. Mary Redcliffe's Church. He himself was married to Hannah Callowhill, a Bristol woman, at the Friends' Meeting-house in the Friary. Indeed, the ties that bind Bristol to the United States are many and close. It will be strange, therefore, if this book does not receive a welcome at the other side of the Atlantic.

Upon the subject of Bristol's connection with literature Mr. Hutton has many interesting things to write. Pepys visited the city in 1668 with his wife and her maid Deb. Deb's uncle, "a sober merchant, very good company", was so like the "sober, wealthy London merchants" that he pleased the great diarist "mightily". Pepys was a visitor to Bristol, but poor, proud young Chatterton was a native. Chatterton's early life revolved around Redcliffe Church. There he conceived those famous Rowley Poems which he passed off on a credulous world as the work of a fifteenth-century monk. For eight years after the author's death in a cold garret pundits fought over the question of authorship. Would that the unhappy boy had been born a little later! He might then have met that prince of booksellers, Joseph Cottle, of Bristol, and the world have been richer by later works. Joseph Cottle had the "undying honour of introducing to the world the first printed production in volume form of such modern classics as Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb, and Southey". He is reported to have paid for Southey's wedding ring and licence.

Bristol glows with the phantom lights of fiction. Alexander Selkirk lived in Bristol after he had been delivered from the wilderness of Juan Fernandez. Defoe met him there, and after that meeting Robinson Crusoe began to walk along the quayside. Thence, too, Gulliver sailed on his memorable voyage to Lilliput. "The lad Hawkins", preparing for a voyage to Treasure Island, met that matchless scoundrel, John Silver, there, and joined with him in the fruitless chase after Black Dog. Who that has walked alone along Bristol wharves, picking his way among the people and carts and balconies—provided always that he was once swept away as a boy by Stevenson's romance—has failed to keep a bright look-out for a little tavern with a large brass telescope painted over the door—the sign of "The Spyglass"? Verily Bristol is rich in shades that mock the imagination.

In commending the book a word of praise must be given to Miss Laura Happerfield. The reproductions of her water-colour paintings are, perhaps, too vivid, but she has caught the spirit of the river and the wharves and the ships gleaming through the mists of the West country.

THE BRIDGE BUILDERS.

"A Book of Bridges." Pictures by Frank Brangwyn. Text by W. Shaw Sparrow. Lane. 21s. net.

AS a "devotee of bridges" through five and twenty years Mr. Sparrow has nursed his proclivity into a fruitful hobby, and now presents a harvest of the results garnered into a singularly inspiring book. It were hard to conceive of a more grateful or more satisfying achievement. For the scope he confesses that "a pontist or devotee of bridges ought to be envied and pitied; his work is marvellously attractive, but he cannot hope to learn even a twentieth part of the discoverable history which has circulated along highways. Indeed, the history goes back to a time that preceded the descent of man." Was there ever enthusiast, we wonder, who reflected with com-

placency upon the shortness of his span of life! Who did not claim, rather, the position of De Quincey in bewailing himself in the presence of a world of treasure in the world of books: "Before I can have had time to extract the honey from one-twentieth of this hive, in all likelihood I shall be summoned away".

The "Book of Bridges" is alive. Its author is no Dryasdust to retail musty records got from "forgotten muniment chests". From cover to cover we may search in vain for "clay-cold" page, or "glacial" footnote, but all is in consent with the freedom of the beautiful pictures—visions truly—that represent the part of Mr. Brangwyn in a perfect collaboration. By the combined art of these devout pontists we are brought to look at bridges with inquisitive eyes. Little by little they assume for us a new aspect—an air of suggestion as concerning some greatness both in human effort and in universal strife that ought not to fall into oblivion. The progressive intelligence in past ages speaks from their very stones, is marked in their builded plan; moreover, it is realised that their scope of present service can with difficulty be measured and defined. "A complete study", says Mr. Shaw Sparrow, "would follow their evolution through eight world-wide subjects: Architecture, civil engineering, antiquarian research, the development of trade and commerce from primitive barter, social wayfaring, war and its red tragedies, the longevity of barbaric customs, usages, traditions, and the ups and downs of fortune in the slow fever called progress". So extensive a curriculum might well daunt the intending neophyte did he not remind himself that to realise bridges in the terms proffered is not necessary to become *dévo*t, or even to blossom out as graduate in the lowest class. It is merely to experience the joy of becoming aware of that which has long stared one in the face, of seeing a little—intelligently—of that which was never seen before.

In tracing with his uniformly clear thought and light touch the story of bridge-building, the author begins at the beginning—at that "once upon a time" period that is archaeological and undated history. And he succeeds in taking his reader with him into the scenes of so young a world that it is not yet become the nursery of man. There he builds him up a platform whence he may visualise grotesque and savage creatures coming and going upon the rough bridges that Nature herself provided to ease their journeys in search of "prey or forage". There is to be recognised the huge ape, the *Dryopithecus*, who with his friends—and foes—was ever in pursuit of business or of pleasure. A fortuitously fallen tree may bring him safely over torrent or chasm, boulders and stepping-stones enable him to cross a flooded river, a ledge of rock, spanning a dangerous gap, can give him safe footway to the other side. Each difficulty is met by natural provision: "but he enjoys himself most of all when a suspension bridge enables him to amble from tree to tree across a deep-lying river pent up between high cliffs". Peace to our arboreal ancestors! We turn with zest to the period of Father Adam and that evolution of "created" bridges that henceforth keeps even pace with the evolution of man.

This is that earliest time when, if tradition may be trusted, man accepted tutorage from the "lower" creation, imitating from beasts and birds and insects those admirable acts of self-protection, self-help, that have no more originality of initiation in their unreasoning brains than—say—the developing of prehensile toes or hairy skins. For the beast the infallible "act" of reason, for man the potential "habit" of reason.

So in ancient belief "the Martin taught tender persons first to keep warm their feet, the Hedgehog to avoid walking in windy seasons, the little Birds to bathe in summer, the Flies and Bees to keep warm in winter". In the chapter "Man as the Mimic of Nature", Mr. Shaw Sparrow has a suggestive passage

upon the "lethargic mimicry" of reasonable beings in the first period of their intercourse with natural things. "Their cave-dwellings", he says, "were stolen from cave-lions and cave-bears; . . . and in their lake dwellings they collected hints from five sources: natural bridges, the platforms built by anthropomorphous apes, the habits of waterfowl, the beaver's dam and 'lodge', and the nest of birds." But man's brain is not made to rest content with imitation. However lethargic it may be, its thought moves ever beyond mere apprehension of the object perceived.

In this theatre of bridges, in nature's enchanted school of architecture into which we are brought, Mr. Brangwyn and Mr. Shaw Sparrow stand as demonstrators, showing where human intelligence first grasped and put in motion its gift of creative imagination, creative power. Here may be realised the puny beginnings of that power, when primal man, the infant and copyist of nature, was thinking and doing along the line of absolute necessity, or at furthest of petty convenience. Exactly on such a spur emerged the notion of cutting down a tree with a flint axe "in order to get a bridge at a chosen place"; and no otherwise the simple thought to span the stream or river with a slab of stone. Nature had suggested both expedients by her fortuitously fallen tree and accidental fording stones in river beds. And so we are made to understand that from such mean ideas—only just removed from the capacity of the beast—a marvellous art was to be evolved, flourishing in the fulness of time into such beauty as is expressed for us by Mr. Brangwyn in many a spirited and spiritual picture. The progress of thought was very slow. It flashed, then wavered and halted as inspiration was given or withheld. But always man kept his place in Nature's school for imitation, curiously regarding her models and using her material. All arches, and circles, and spirals are, for example, a direct suggestion from Nature. "The archways of Nature", says Mr. Shaw Sparrow, "not only suggested the arched bridge of handicraft, but heralded all the lovely styles of building which have used vaults, domes, turrets, towers, spires, steeples, and arched openings—gateways, porches, and windows". That the bridge drew to its use all these beauties at one time or another is apparent in examining the pictures, especially The Housed Bridge, as at Kreuznach, on the Nahe; The Shrined Bridge, as at Elche, in Spain; the Bridge of Mills, as at Millau, in Southern France; the Chapelled Bridge, as at Avignon; the War Bridge in many places; the Bridge of Shops, as at Venice, on the Rialto. So the mimic creator is observed to creep down the ages, progressing most slowly from perception to perception, from apprehension to apprehension, until at length, filled with beauty and with radiance of spirit, he may dare to use the words of the Scientist himself, "Oh, God, now am I thinking Thy thoughts after Thee!" To see bridges with the eyes of the pontist is, however, to perceive more than the evolution of beauty and of convenience. It is to look deep below stones, form, and handicraft into abstract things that concern the very springs of life. It is to recognise in these noble, sordid, or ruined structures mute witness to the universal law of strife. "Every road through history", says the author, "is a changing procession of armies, every ancient bridge has a long story of battles. Indeed, bridges and roads have circulated all the many phases of strife that men have employed in civil rivalries, in mercantile competitions, in generative migrations, in roadside adventures with footpads and cut-throats, in fateful invasions, and in those missionary conquests which have given to religions their rival empires." The "Book of Bridges", written before the Great War, lays stress on the beneficent function of strife in the world's affairs. There is no good, no joy, it seems to say, but in growth and in advance. And "Life", affirms Bergson, "cannot advance without bruising that which lives"! It is no new doctrine, though nearly forgotten—that War stands to Peace as its *opposite necessity*.

VALETING THE GREAT.

"Herbert Henry Asquith." By Harold Spender. Newnes. 2s. 6d.

"David Lloyd George." By H. Du Parcq. Newnes. 2s. 6d.

"LOYALTY", says Mr. Spender, "withers from sheer lack of food" if the people are not told about their leaders. So Mr. Spender and Mr. Du Parcq, to preserve our loyalty, have written these little books. We are thereby made aware of "a beacon of wisdom . . . to lighten the thick gloom, as of a darkness palpable and visible, which enshrouds the future of mankind". Mr. Spender's beacon is the Prime Minister; Mr. Du Parcq's beacon is the Minister of Munitions.

Now we should have thought that no unkindlier cut could be made at Ministers of the late Government than to dig up and to publish publicly their past political careers. If there is anything these Ministers must desire to forget utterly to-day it is surely those long years of domestic absorption in which they neglected to prepare their country for war. One imagines that, given the need to feed and sustain the public loyalty upon careers prematurely regarded as historical matter, our leaders would at all events very strongly desire to be saved from their party admirers. Mr. Spender and Mr. Du Parcq do not simply remind us that Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George in 1913 were more interested in breaking the House of Lords and raising the People against the Peers than in observing and regarding what Germany was about. These enthusiastic biographers exult outright in the fact. Mr. Du Parcq talks of "epoch-making" contests—something to do with rates and the Welsh Church; and Mr. Spender conducts the Prime Minister over the forgotten battlefields of Veto and Curragh. Neither seems to be at all aware that all these things belong to another life; and are best forgotten—at least so long as national leadership remains a national thing. We could forgive Mr. Du Parcq for reminding us, as a quaint fact, that Mr. Lloyd George once escaped under a policeman's coat from a public which resented his preaching against a British war; and that he entered in his diary on 4 May 1900: "Government badly damaged by the Spion Kop debate". But we can scarcely forgive Mr. Du Parcq for asking us really to be thrilled and interested by these performances. Mr. Spender's rejoicings in the phrases of Mr. Asquith's political past are equally difficult to bear with patience. Mr. Asquith's "We have been too long a Peer-ridden nation" is hailed as the inspiration of a political seer; and Mr. Spender does not hesitate to base passages of lyrical admiration of Mr. Asquith's temperament and policy upon a phrase from which, we are sure, Mr. Asquith would gladly disencumber himself to-day. "Wait and see", says Mr. Spender, "expresses an ingrained habit of hopefulness; a refusal to aggravate the worries of the day by thinking of the morrow; a belief that difficulties have a tendency to straighten themselves out; that the magic of cure is always at work in human affairs". Mr. Asquith has excellent reason to desire a rescue from his admirer. The "First Minister of Great Britain at the stormiest hour of her fate" has found that a refusal to aggravate the worries of to-day by thinking of the morrow and a belief that difficulties have a tendency to straighten themselves out are not, after all, the most supremely necessary qualities in a statesman.

Books such as these are rarely pleasant to read, even when one is in the mood for party snippets. To-day they are unutterably false and dreary. Nothing could be more desolate to-day than the old and barren field these volumes cover. What useful purpose can they possibly serve? It will hardly help Mr. Lloyd George at a time when he is trying to pull the country together to be confronted with a political past in which he tried to set every class by the ears. Mr. Asquith's position as a national leader will not be strengthened by reminiscences based on his adroit application of

the principles of "Wait and see". The late opponents of the late Government are content to let these matters rest forgotten. Why, then, do their admirers insist upon this exhumation? Is it that they have not yet realised the meaning of "truce" and "coalition" and "European war"? Or is it simply an instinct of political adoration impossible to control? We can only hope for the sake of these two Ministers that these books will be regarded simply as the ludicrous indiscretions of their idolators. So long as our public men are unable to copyright their careers they must be liable to this sort of thing. It is one of the penalties of being politically conspicuous.

PATIENCE AND SEA-POWER.

"Famous Days and Deeds in Holland and Belgium."
By Charles Morris. Lippincott. 5s. net.

THE scope of this book is explained by its title. Of the wars of the past, almost the only echoes that reach us to-day are of heroic incidents and decisive events. The historian can trace their course as clearly as we can trace the course of the river that flows through London to the sea, and in works designed to be popular a false impression is, in consequence, often created. This narrative of the revolt of the Netherlands is a piece of writing which may well stir the imagination, but we are aware that it is essentially theatrical. It gives an idea of the Netherlanders as a small but sturdy race advancing to an inevitable victory for liberty against the tyranny of overblown Spain. Little of this, we may be sure, was apparent to the actors in the drama. Often the rebels must have seemed to themselves to be engaged in a desperate struggle. Spain must have appeared invincible. We are wise after the event, but we cannot doubt that the brave Netherlanders often came near to abandoning hope if not to throwing down their arms.

In military strength the Spaniards were incomparable in Europe. Brantôme wrote that their infantry was the flower of the nations, and all contemporary observers repeat his unstinted praise. England had only a crude militia unused to the hardships of a stiff campaign, whilst France had to depend on more or less untrustworthy foreign mercenaries to augment the feudal cavalry whose presence and loyalty depended on the goodwill of sundry lords. The Dutch themselves, splendid as was their record on sea, displayed small stomach for meeting the "soldados viejos" whose regiments always formed the backbone of the armies which the King of Spain collected on the Continent. Against these Spanish veterans, musketeers and pikemen, whose traditions dated from the days of Gonsalvo de Cordova, what new levies could stand? Help from abroad, eagerly expected, was long, too, in coming. The story of the rising of the Netherlands is really less a record of heroic deeds than one of heroic patience. Those, like Bréderode, who would have forced the pace, have left behind the reputations of gorgeous fools rather than of patriots, and their frothy exhortations to the people never resulted in much but rousing the insensate fury of a riff-raff who sacked churches and murdered friars. William the Silent was condemned by many for his shifts and compromises, and we must realise that he who is to-day lauded as one of the world's greatest statesmen was in his own time sometimes held less than a man.

For modern peoples the story of the revolt of the Low Countries is rich in lessons of sea-power. Motley and the historians who have followed him are never tired of pouring scorn on the policy of Elizabeth for her sloth or worse in helping the Dutch. Truly she did not much like rebels or Calvinists, but Quadra was in the right when he wrote to Philip that she would gladly "sow heresy broadcast in all your Majesty's dominions to-day, and set them ablaze", nor was he wrong in adding, "her language (learnt from Italian heretic friars) is so shifty that it is the most difficult thing in the world to negotiate with her". De la Marck, the leader of the "Water Beggars" whose expedition from Dover "begot the

Dutch Republic", according to Professor Pollard, sailed with her connivance, and after enjoying English protection. Spain's great trade was brought to ruin by the privateers of Holland and England. Philip's wonderful army could not be paid, and everybody knows the consequence; whilst, moreover, it became possible for the Prince of Orange, with increasing spoils at his disposal, to engage mercenaries who were at least better fitted to meet the Spaniards on land than were his own burghers. Less important, but decidedly appreciable, was the triumph of Henry IV. in another quarter. When he drew Parma's troops from their proper work in the Netherlands to relieve the Leaguers in Paris and Rouen, although he never came to blows with them, he saved the situation for the Dutch for the time at least, and gave them leisure to recuperate. The heroic history of the period is written otherwise, but here we come near the truth. Many must have thought Spain unconquerable, but in the end her great power was exhausted.

ONCE A MONTH.

The "Nineteenth Century" is more than usually good this month. Mr. A. Carson Roberts, in his paper on "True National Service," writes nobly on many phases of a great subject. Lord Cromer studies the rival zealots who chatter to the world about the teaching of patriotism, and from his own wide experience he draws much wisdom that many parents and teachers should accept. "A French View of Anglo-French Relations", by Henry D. Davray, is thoughtful and stimulating; and there are three articles on the crisis in the Balkans, the best one dealing with the strategical significance of Serbia. The Countess Zanardi Landi draws vivid pictures of Austria and of her relations with Germany, and Mr. J. O. P. Bland studies the policy of Japan in China. From these very serious adventures we turn to Mr. H. M. Walbrook's chatty paper on the "Pall Mall Gazette" under four editors. "The Care of the Wounded: Then and Now", by Miss S. Macnaughtan, is another article of merit, to be bracketed with Dr. Mary Scharlieb's excellent remarks on medical women, their training, their difficulties, and their sphere of usefulness. Here, too, is a charming paper by Mr. Hagberg Wright on the Peasant Songs of Russia. Prince Kropotkin sets new thought astir on inherited variation in animals, and Captain Charles Bathurst, M.P., on "The Land Settlement of Ex-Servicemen".

Perhaps the most thoughtful article in the "Fortnightly Review" is the one by Mr. Beriah G. Evans on "Mr. Lloyd George as Minister of a Democracy". Next in political importance comes a paper on "The Balkan Imbroglio", by Dr. E. J. Dillon. Aspects of public finance are treated by Mr. J. M. Kennedy, Mr. Archibald Hurd, and Mr. J. E. Allen. "In Neutral America", by Mr. James Davenport Whelpley, we study a few of the queer problems which collect in non-combatant countries during a great war, but Mr. Whelpley is reticent. Mr. G. E. Pitt writes well on the military preparation of young France, and Mr. John Galsworthy tries to say something that is new about art and the war—a subject he does not yet understand. Lord Redesdale's Memories are reviewed by Mr. Edmund Gosse. "Auditor Tantum" writes very frankly on the present House of Commons, and shows how it has degenerated. He writes a stern, but just epitaph upon Mr. Keir Hardie, who did so much to poison the mind of Labour against Capital. "No one strove more laboriously and insidiously to destroy in the breast of the workers the grand old ideas of duty to king and country, which are implicit in the word patriotism". The new phase of the campaign is examined by "Zero", and "Politicus" deals with "Greece and Europe".

"Blackwood's Magazine," as usual, could not well be bettered. The Junior Sub proves again that he has mastered the art of writing about war, and of doing justice to friend and foe. "Whatever we may think of the Bosche as a gentleman", he writes, "there is no denying his bravery as a soldier or his skill in co-ordinating an attack. It's positively uncanny the way his artillery supports his infantry". Mr. Charles Whibley is excellent in his character-study of Alexander Paulovitch, known to history as Alexander I. of Russia. An Exchanged Officer, in an article called "Würzburg", shows with ease a very keen wit and observation, and a Red Cross Pro. tells civilians all that they need know about the tragic wards in war-time. There is a first-rate story—a little work of true art—by Mr. Hilton Brown; and there is a first-rate account of a visit to Bagdad. Phrase after phrase in this tale of travel would have charmed Coleridge. To read of "the Golden Domes of Kazimein" is to pass into a magic atmosphere, away from our own day into the Arabian Nights.

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The "National Review" has more contributors than usual this month. The Earl of Cromer writes on German military ethics; Mr. Coulson Kernahan relates in a happy manner some recollections of Lord Roberts; and Mr. W. van Lede is an outspoken critic in "An Eye-witness's Impressions of the Fall of Antwerp". There is also an excellent character-sketch of Sir Edward Carson, written by Miss Bates; and the Countess of Selborne does full justice to "Women's National Service". Other good papers deal with the Cameroons, American Affairs, Australians and the War, and "The Lack of a Naval Policy". Mr. Maxse in one of his ideas tries to rival Dean Swift's remarks on the cooking of babies. He says: "Any German, whether naturalised or not, seen in Downing Street, liable to be shot at sight"—with Kodaks, we assume!

"Cornhill" this month opens with Mrs. Asquith's paper on a visit to Hawarden in December, 1889. C. J. D. writes in verse a spontaneously amusing "Letter from a Vacation Judge". Mr. Shelland Bradley has seven chattering pages on pigs, and Mr. W. H. Adams puts a good story into a "Red Box". Other contributions include some political gossip by Sir Henry Lucy, and a clever paper on "Fear" by Mr. S. G. Tallentyre.

THE QUARTERLIES.

In the "Edinburgh Review" we notice, first, out of many articles of authority, Mr. Wickham Steed's discussion of Austria's position and influence. He begins with a general discussion of our foreign policy. Mr. Steed is of opinion that "not until after the first six months of the war did the diplomacy of the Allies really reveal comprehension of the main German purpose in precipitating it. That purpose can only be defeated decisively and irrevocably, if the diplomacy of the Allies is guided by the settled determination so to reconstitute Europe that a renewal of the struggle shall become impossible. Europe cannot be so reconstituted without the dismemberment of the Hapsburg Monarchy. The overthrow of the Turkish Empire and the settlement of the Balkan problem would necessarily involve the solution, once and for all, of the Austrian problem. The aim of the Central Empires is domination; the aim of the Allies must be, not passively or reluctantly, but actively and constructively, liberation in accordance with the principle of nationality. Greece, Bulgaria, and Rumania should receive as nearly as possible their ethnographical boundaries. Serbia should be united with the Southern Slavs hitherto under Hapsburg rule—that is to say, with the Serb and Croat inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia, part of Istria, and the Slovene country".

It will be objected that this is cruelly to disregard the existence of Austria as a power. But Mr. Steed, who knows Austria so well, declares outright that, "No sentimental solicitude for the maintenance of a semi-Asiatic polity like that of the Hapsburgs ought to stand for a moment in the way of a thorough re-adjustment of the political configuration of Europe. The Hapsburgs have had their opportunity and have misused it".

Mr. David Hannay writes of German methods and of "militarism" with great sense and clearness. He concludes with a shrewd warning against the sentimental prophets who talk even now of a war that will end war. "There are some who have convinced themselves that this war will end in the destruction of 'militarism.' Let us hope they are right. But the usual consequence of a great war has been to produce more 'militarism.' That this one will be an exception is a mere prophecy, and therefore cannot be confuted. The distinguished Spanish man of science, Senor Ramon y Cajal, when at last he was worried into giving his opinion as to the consequences of the present war, said that neither side would win so completely as to destroy the other, and that the losing party would set about imitating the winner in the hope of one day taking its revenge. So the world will be the worse for it all. He was accused of a 'desolating pessimism'; but imagining as one would, and believing what you wish to believe, are not the surest ways of reaching the truth."

The Editor, in an article upon the Cabinet, keenly analyses the current clamour as to what should and should not be done with the Government. We welcome his just appreciation of Lord Kitchener: "Lord Kitchener is not only a soldier and a military administrator of the very first order, but he has also had immense experience in problems of civil administration and in the great underlying problem of handling men. No man commands greater respect among his fellow countrymen; in no man's judgment is the country more willing to place unhesitating confidence." The writer then proceeds to deal with the unthinking critics who call to-day for a change of rule without having thought seriously as to what is likely to follow the revolution they desire. Of a dictatorship he is entirely scornful: "The idea is impossible. There is no man in the United Kingdom whom the country would accept as a dictator, and the whole conception of a dictatorship is foreign to our English traditions and habits. For good or for evil the committee

method of government is part of our blood and bone. All that we ask for is a committee to do the work entrusted to it."

The "Quarterly Review", like the "Edinburgh", devotes its most studied and thoughtful article to the question of Austria. Lord Cromer describes very clearly the patchwork of Austria: "The country is riven and torn asunder in a very special degree by all the most volcanic tendencies of the present age. Amidst this mosaic of nationalities there is no room for an Austrian fatherland. When the German speaks of 'Austria', he thinks of Vienna, the Czech of Prague, the Pole of Cracow, and the Croat of Agram." Lord Cromer, like Mr. Steed, insists that in Austria nationalism must be let loose for the sake of Europe. The old system must go: "Under the old régime the monarchs of Europe vied with each other in making arrangements, such as the successive Partitions of Poland, which inflicted cruel injustice on the populations concerned, who were considered as mere pawns in the game played by rival rulers and dynasties. The French Revolution produced no change for the better; and the evils of the system reached their culminating point during the period of Napoleonic ascendancy."

For a momentary escape from these harder problems we turn to Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie's article on the poets of the war. He has nothing very new to say on this old theme of literary essayists. Why war poetry should seldom be great poetry is a question often asked and frequently answered much as Mr. Abercrombie answers it; but he expresses his convictions well. We quote a passage in which he sums up his general opinion: "They served their turn, their momentary turn; they need do no more. Poetry does not come about automatically; it is the most unlikely thing in the world that a great war should be simultaneously celebrated in great poetry. How many of the famous poems about war have been concerned with contemporary war? How many of the great poets have not lived through famous wars and, so far as their art was concerned, ignored them? We have, however—to make a final selection—verses from Mr. Gibson, Mr. Masfield, and Mr. Hardy, which are certainly immediate poetic commentary on the war as good as we would reasonably look for. And with Rupert Brooke's sonnets, we may say that no other war in our whole history has been instantly transmuted into poetry of purer gold."

Mr. Ashley, in an article upon Germany's economic condition, takes a rather lower view of German patriotism and organisation than Germany's enemies have reason to believe is just. "The measures of the Government", Mr. Ashley writes, "have been constantly met by evasion and subterfuge of every description. Against its will it has been driven, time after time, from a policy of maximum prices to a policy of State monopoly, merely because the peasants would not bring their stuff to market. The quite unnecessary scare about potatoes in the early spring, with its unfortunate consequence, was brought about simply by the cunning of the peasants in concealing their stocks. Even the regulations about bread have been far from meeting with ungrudging obedience." He continues as to the German Government and its conduct of the war: "Before the war, I confess, I was a believer in the efficiency of the German bureaucracy and the practical utility of German economic and administrative science. But there are capable German critics of the Government who declare that it has been driven along, in spite of itself, by the force of circumstances; that it has never grasped a situation firmly with a well-thought-out policy, but lagged behind with belated measures and inadequate compromises." In view of what Germany has achieved this will hardly be seriously accepted.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- Cable, B., *Between the Lines*. Smith Elder. 5s. net.
 Cooper, E., *The Harim and the Purdah*. Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.
 Colvin, J. D., *The Germans in England*. Nat. Rev. 6s. net.
 Campbell, D. M., *Java*. Heinemann. 2 vols. 36s. net.
 Buzzard, T., *With the Turkish Army in the Crimea and Asia Minor*. Murray. 10s. 6d. net.
 Burpee, L. J., *Among the Canadian Alps*. Lane. 10s. 6d. net.
 Fraser, J. F., *Russia To-day*. Cassell. 6s.
 Gissing, G., *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*. Constable. 4s. 6d. net.
 Gjerset, K., *History of the Norwegian People*. Macmillan. 2 vols. 34s. net.
 Johnson, L., *Poetical Works of*. Mathews. 7s. 6d. net.
 Jocelyn, Col. J. R. J., *History of the Royal and Indian Artillery in the Indian Mutiny*. Murray. 21s. net.
 Lee, R. W., *An Introduction to Roman-Dutch Law*. Oxford Press. 12s. 6d. net.
 Macdonald, Sir J. H. A., *Life Jottings*. Foulis. 10s. 6d. net.
 Pearce, C. E., *The Jolly Duchess*. Paul. 16s. net.
 Putnam, G. H., *Memories of a Publisher*. Putnam. 9s. net.
 Porter, R. P., *Japan: The New World-Power*. Oxford Press. 6s. net.
 Redesdale, Lord, *Memories*. Hutchinson. 2 vols. 32s. net each.
 Welldon, Bishop, *Recollections and Reflections*. Cassell. 12s. net.

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